

THE BIBLE
IN THE LIGHT OF
MODERN KNOWLEDGE

E. SAVELL HICKS

BS535
H5x

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Of
Fr. O'Grady

THE BIBLE LITERATURE IN THE
LIGHT OF MODERN KNOWLEDGE

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Modern Knowledge

BY

E. SAVELL HICKS

M.A. (*Oxon*)

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Introduction

'THE message of God was given in many manners. The Christian believer need not hesitate to recognize in the early chapters of Genesis narratives which are not historical but give us doctrine in the form of a story . . . he will read the Hebrew documents like the documents of any other history, but he will find in them something which he does not find in any other history to nearly the same extent—a continual guidance, in which he will recognize the inspiring influence of the Holy Spirit training and guiding a race to right thoughts about God and man, to a right sense of sin, and a right expectation of redemption. . . Making no claim for scientific or historical infallibility he will see in them in their different degrees, and according to their different literary methods and human idiosyncrasies, organs of one spirit working towards one end and that end the religion of Christ.'—*Bishop Gore, 'New Theology and Old Religion.'*

NO better definition could be given of the motives that underlie all the work that modern scholarship has expended on the study of the structure and contents of the Bible than is contained in the words of Bishop Gore quoted above. Men of almost every household of faith have borne their part in what is generally called the Higher Criticism. Their motive has been simply and solely to ascertain the Truth about the development of the literature which has

meant so much in the religious views and moral progress of humanity. Biblical criticism is *historical not dogmatic* in its method ; it has no concern except to elucidate facts, and it leaves the followers of various systems of thought to use those facts, and weave them as they may please into the structure of their thought.

The conclusions set forth in these pages are a matter of common knowledge to students of the most diverse religious opinions, and all that is attempted here is to set forth those conclusions in a simple and as far as possible concise form. In many cases the opinions of critics differ on some of the points dealt with. As far as possible the most recent conclusions have been followed, and where there is any considerable difference between authorities it has generally been indicated.

E. S. H.

DUBLIN, *December*, 1911.

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THE BIBLE LITERATURE IN THE LIGHT OF MODERN KNOWLEDGE

CHAPTER I

The Bible and the New Criticism

THE scientific spirit of modern times is responsible for many alterations in our outlook upon the world and its history; every part of the area of knowledge has been subjected to its tests and analyses. It has effected far-reaching changes both in our methods and results; and, among other things, it has at length compelled men to recognize that religion and its evidences must be judged by the same standards that are applied in other departments of knowledge and research. The effect has been to upset many long cherished theories and beliefs; and modern criticism has been accused of strangling faith and obscuring belief by tearing down the old standards of revelation and authority, whilst substituting nothing in their place.

As a matter of fact the eventual effect must be to explain many otherwise inexplicable contradictions of the Bible

Effect of
modern
scientific
spirit

Its result on
our estimate
of the Bible

2 The Bible and the New Criticism

tions in the Bible as stages in the evolution of thought ; and when the pain that is unfortunately inseparable from the alteration of beliefs and opinions has ceased, it will be recognized that the ultimate effect of criticism is never to destroy Truth but rather to make it more plain—to enlarge our view—to increase the true Faith that is born of fuller knowledge and deeper understanding—and to give us a nobler conception of the continuous revelation of God to Man as he is able to bear it.

The whole question of the history and interrelation of the literature of the Bible is a highly complex one, and this book is an attempt to give a brief and simple account of some of the results reached so far, in a form that can easily be understood, and which will serve to show the significance of the change of view that has taken place, and to indicate the historical order and setting of the various parts of the Bible.

Bible not
chronologic-
ally arranged

The books of the Old and New Testaments were not written in the order in which they stand in the Bible ; in many cases they were not written by the men whose names they bear. The Psalms are from the hands of many authors, not of one ; under the title of Isaiah are bound up the works of various writers extending over several centuries ; while the first five books which have been traditionally ascribed to Moses, are now found to be of composite origin, and to embody the work of at least four writers—or groups of writers.

The Critical Method

How do critics decide these things ? It is impossible here to give a full account of all the reasons

which justify their conclusions, and the methods employed in arriving at a decision; but to put it very simply :—

Every nation has its own peculiar language; but this language varies and grows from age to age, and in contact with foreign customs and ideas, new phrases and idioms are borrowed.

Literary
Method

For example, if a writer narrating ancient Saxon customs and events, made use of Norman French expressions, you would be fairly safe in concluding that he wrote at a date when, owing to historical changes, Norman French phrases had begun to pass into the currency of English. If, on the other hand, he wrote in Elizabethan, or Victorian English, even though he were describing the Roman occupation, and speaking as though he had been eye-witness of the events related, you would legitimately conclude that this was merely a literary artifice to add vividness to the story, and would fix his date as the 16th or the 19th century accordingly.

So if you find a 'Psalm of David' written with Persian phrase and idiom, or with obvious allusions to Babylon; or words attributed to Moses which could only have been used by a writer who was living a thousand years or more after Moses' death;—you may fix the date of the narrative, just as you would if Julius Cæsar were represented as alluding to a phonograph, or William the Conqueror sending a telegram.

Historical allusion to events narrated on clay tablets, or ancient writings and inscriptions upon papyrus or stone, furnish another useful means of verifying dates and events; and our stock of these,

Historical
Method

4 The Bible and the New Criticism

together with our knowledge of Persian, Assyrian, Babylonian, and Egyptian history have been vastly increased in recent years.

Assumed names

It must be borne in mind that just as the modern writer frequently uses an assumed name, or writes in the first person singular about events which happened centuries ago, so did the writers of the books of the Old Testament ; and it was regarded as quite legitimate to ascribe Psalms to David, or literature to Moses, which neither the one nor the other had actually produced. Each writer has his own peculiar style, idiom, or outlook on the world, and this affords a valuable clue to authorship in those books in which more than one writer has had a hand.

Individual Character- istics

Editing

Allowance must also be made for the fact that all our extant books have been edited and re-edited, copied and re-copied again and again ; in many instances marginal notes and comments have become copied into the text itself, and other alterations and insertions have been made. As Professor Cheyne has pointed out, 'the primary object of the later editors was not critical accuracy but edification.'

No vowels in Hebrew

It should also be remembered that Hebrew was originally written without any vowels. Later some of the consonants were sometimes utilised for vowel sounds, but what we know as 'pointing,' i.e. the indication of vowel sounds in Hebrew by means of certain symbols, was not introduced until six or seven hundred years after the time of Christ, by the Massoretic scholars. This makes considerable confusion on occasion and has been responsible for many misreadings and errors. One effect of it has been that the Hebrew name for God is lost. It is generally rendered as

Jehovah, but the four consonants J-h-v-h are all that we really know of the word ; what the vowels were that filled in the gaps we do not know, but the most probable pronunciation seems to be JAHVEH. In this case of J-h-v-h it was regarded as a name of such sanctity that it was retained as a priestly mystery—handed on with the utmost secrecy until at last its pronunciation was lost. Those who *knew* ceased to exist, and only the skeleton of the sacred name survives. 'Jahveh' seems most likely, but is uncertain.

How confusing and difficult certain passages in the Old Testament are made by this custom of writing in consonants only, is well illustrated by the two following instances :—

'The Hebrew word (or consonant outline of a word) *q-t-l* may be a noun, a verb, or a participle : and if a verb it may be active, passive, or reflexive ; and it may have nine different meanings according to the vowels that the reader supplies in connection with it. The Hebrew word *b-d-h-r* may have five different meanings, to wit : 'a word,' 'he hath spoken,' 'to speak,' 'speaking,' 'it has been spoken,' and 'a pestilence' according to the vowels we supply.'¹

The Beginning of Criticism

It was noted about a century ago by a French physician, Astruc, that in Genesis two different names were used to designate God—one the Hebrew mystic term J.h.v.h. and the other the plural name Elohim (which literally means *Gods*). It was further noted that wherever these different names occurred

The two narratives in Genesis

'J,' the Jahvist

¹ Sunderland 'Origin of the Bible,' p. 206.

6 The Bible and the New Criticism

'E,' the
Elohists

there were divergencies of style, language, and ideas. Following up this clue, it was seen that there were two distinct stories woven together in Genesis, one by the 'Jahveh' writer and the other by the 'Elohim' writer. These were carefully separated out in the narratives of the Creation, and the Flood, and each was found to form a complete account in itself.

'D,' Deuter-
onomist'

'P,' Priestly
Writer

The work of these two writers was then traced right through Genesis, Exodus, and Numbers. Deuteronomy was next seen to be in agreement with neither, and was accordingly assigned to a third writer known as the DEUTERONOMIST or 'D' for short; while yet a fourth series of writings and ideas different from the other three was discovered in Leviticus. Its author was more extremely ritualistic than the others, and he is accordingly known as the PRIESTLY WRITER. His style, thought, and phraseology were then further followed up and found to form part of the Elohim narratives also. The works of J, E, D, and P (as they are generally called for the sake of brevity) have now been dissected out, and found to comprise the first six books of the Old Testament. Their dates will be indicated later

CHAPTER II

Early Hebrew History

THE early history of the Hebrews—like most early Early History histories, is uncertain and obscure. As a nation its record begins with the settlement in Canaan.

Before this era commences it is almost impossible to separate fact from legend in the misty twilight of ancient tradition. Previous to its settlement the Hebrew race was apparently merely a group of nomadic tribes or clans, which had broken away from a loose vassaldom to Egypt, and were wandering from encampment to encampment in search of a new home. The Nomadic Period

It was in fact precisely one of those movements of population that have repeatedly taken place within historical times. The latest and most familiar instance perhaps is the 'great trek' of the Boer settlers in South Africa; while the overrunning of Rome by the Barbarians, and the incursions of Angles, Saxons, and Danes in our own country are familiar examples of a similar process.

In those days there rises supreme the great personality of Moses, who was at once lawgiver, priest, judge, and general. Practically none of his actual work survives, save as a tradition which was carried on by his successors, and upon which they built. His per- Moses

sonality has been surrounded by legend and story, and the fact of his having acted as judge (as most priests of ancient time did) was considered a justification for utilising his name in the promulgation of the national laws when in a later age they came to be codified and reduced to written form.

Rejection of
Mosaic
authorship

It may not unnaturally appear to many that this rejection of the Mosaic authorship of the early books of the Old Testament is somewhat reckless and unjustified, and it may be well to give a brief summary of some of the reasons that have led students to come to this conclusion.

In the first place, on what grounds does the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch rest? Firstly there is a tradition which attributes it to him. But traditions prove nothing beyond the fact that for a considerable time men have believed a certain thing. What do the early books themselves say on the subject? There are only four passages which speak of Mosaic authorship:—

Slender
internal
evidence

(a) Ex. 17¹⁴, speaking of the battle with Amalek, 'and the Lord said to Moses, write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua.' This obviously refers only to the battle.

(b) Ex. 21²⁻³, certain judgments and legal enactments are said to have been given to Moses by God, and to have been written in the Book of the Covenant—but this only refers to a small body of laws, not to the Pentateuch.

(c) In Numbers 33², a list of stations in the march of Israel from Egypt are attributed to Moses.

(d) In Deut. 31⁹, Moses is claimed as the author of that book—again not of the whole Pentateuch.

On the other hand, it does not appear likely that the great lawgiver, writing of himself, would say 'These are that Aaron and Moses to whom the Lord said,' etc. (Ex. 6²⁶⁻²⁷), still less that he should say of himself 'the man Moses was very meek, above all that were before him on the face of the earth,' Num. 12³, or 'the man Moses was very great in the land of Egypt.'

But a more fatal objection to the Mosaic authorship is to be found in the contents of the early books. Both Deuteronomy and Leviticus, as well as other parts of the Pentateuch, insist definitely, and with most fearful imprecation on those who disobey, on the fact that Jerusalem is the only place of acceptable worship, and that all local shrines are an abomination, and accursed; and yet you have some of the finest of the Old Testament 'holy men' apparently trampling all this underfoot: Samuel, Nathan, Elijah, and Elisha visit and sacrifice at local sanctuaries, with no ill effects and apparently with no consciousness of wrong. How is this possible if the Mosaic legislation had been promulgated by Moses himself, and existed in their day? It is inconceivable that it had existed and that all trace and all memory of it had perished. Moreover, the three bodies of Law (in Exodus, Deuteronomy, and Leviticus) do not agree with one another—their conception of God is different, their attitude to the priesthood is widely different, and it is inconceivable that they should have been given by a single writer.

But most glaring of all is the case of the name JAHVEH itself. In Ex. 6²⁻⁸ God reveals himself by a new name. 'I am JAHVEH (Jehovah), and I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob

Inconsistencies in the Pentateuch

Revelation of name
J H V H

as EL SHADDAI (God Almighty), *but by my name Jahveh (Jehovah) I was not known unto them.* Now turn to Genesis, and you find God represented as appearing to Abraham and saying 'I am Jahveh that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees'; to Jacob, 'I am Jahveh the God of thy father,' etc.; Abraham builds an altar to Jahveh and calls on the name of Jahveh; and it is known to Sarah and Lot; while at the very commencement of things we are told of the family of Adam, 'then did men begin to call on the name of Jahveh.' Such glaring and obvious contradictions could hardly have been the work of one author, still less the result of 'verbal inspiration.' These are but a few illustrations, which might be greatly multiplied; but they will suffice to show the path along which thought has been working, while as we proceed it will be seen how widely separated in date and authorship are the various portions of the work usually ascribed to Moses.

Settlement in Canaan

The group of loosely organized tribes, that were to become the Jewish nation, invaded the strip of territory at the eastern end of the Mediterranean, which we now call Palestine. The native Canaanites were settled in the south-west, the Arabians in the south; and into their country this living wedge of new settlers forced its way.

Conquest and Extermination

There are two accounts in the Old Testament of what happened. The Book of Joshua represents the conquest as being sudden, ruthless, and complete *in Joshua's lifetime.* 'He smote it with the edge of the sword, and of all the souls therein he left not one re-

maining' (Joshua, chap. 10) gives you the spirit and method of this war of extermination, as it is described in the pages of Joshua.

The Book of Judges tells quite a different story, of a gradual and partial conquest, and a fusion of the invaders and natives *after Joshua's death*. The truth probably lies between the two; the process being partly conquest, partly intermarriage and alliance between the victors and the vanquished.

The result was inevitably the borrowing of some of the Canaanite religious usages. The conquered population, it is important to remember, had been considerably influenced by both Babylon and Egypt. The Tel-el-amar-n-a tablets, which were discovered in 1887, have thrown a flood of light on early conditions in the Palestinian area. This series of state documents belonging to the reign of Amen-hotep III of Egypt (c. 1450 B.C.), contain a voluminous correspondence, written on clay tablets, between the Egyptian king and his allies and vassals. The letters range from Cyprus, and northern Syria, to Babylonia, and they include correspondence dated from various cities of Palestine, and from the kings of Jerusalem, Megiddo, and other cities who at that time owned their vassal-dom to Egypt. The letters though addressed to the *Egyptian* monarch are written in the *Babylonian* language, which was then the general medium of communication among the 'cultured' of different nationalities, just as Latin was in a later period of human history; this ancient correspondence has shown conclusively how great were the influences of both Babylon and Egypt on the country in which the Israelites settled.

Fusion and
Intermarriage

Canaanite
influences

Professor Sayce has no hesitation in tracing the origin of Tithes, the plan of the Temple, the various Feast Days, the institution of the Sabbath, together with a great many other Jewish institutions and beliefs to a Babylonian origin through Canaanite channels. It is stated in the Old Testament records, that Baal, the Sun God, and Astarte, the Moon Goddess, as well as Jahveh, were worshipped by the Jews; while Moloch claimed his toll of human victims among the Israelites in the days of Ahaz. That the influence of all this on the conception of Jehovah was considerable is seen in the fact that he was thought to be well pleased with human sacrifice. This is apparent in the story of Jephtha's daughter, sacrificed in fulfilment of a rash vow; in the hanging up '*unto the Lord*' of Saul's seven sons, by David, in order that a famine might be stayed; in the fate of the people of Shittim at the hands of Moses, and Phineas—'and the Lord said unto Moses, take all the chiefs of the people, and hang them up *unto the Lord, before the sun*, that the fierce anger of the Lord may turn away from Israel'; in the hewing in pieces '*before the Lord*' of Agag by Samuel, and other similar instances. Jahveh¹ indeed at this period was a purely national God; and the whole conception of him was as different from the lofty imagery of the later prophets, and psalmists, as anything well could be. He was regarded as so bound up with the very soil of Palestine that when Naaman was cleansed he begged for two mules' burden of earth in order that he might erect a suitable altar with the sacred soil, in a foreign land; and David complains of the persecution of his enemies

¹ Judges 11; 2 Sam. 21; Numbers 25; 1 Sam. 15³³.

and his enforced exile as being tantamount to compelling him to 'go and serve other gods.' He was worshipped, in fact, as one among 'the other gods' of the land, all of whom the Israelites sought to propitiate, regarding each as powerful in his or her own particular sphere.¹

The rough and unsettled period of the *Judges*—Period of the Judges chiefs who ruled by virtue of their personal prowess and force of character—resulted at length in the welding of the tribes into a nation.

Monarchy

Eventually the turbulent national life settled down to a more orderly state, and developed into a monarchy under Saul.

David, whose accession was about the year 1000 B.C., carried on the work of consolidation, built up the kingdom to a power it had never known before, and above all gave an impetus to the worship of Jahveh, by identifying the fortunes of the royal house with the national religion by bringing up the Ark to Jerusalem, and making that city the chief shrine of Jahveh worship. David c. 1000 B.C.

Friends were courted, foes crushed, and the nation attained to the meridian of its power under him and his son Solomon. Precise dates are still uncertain, but the death of Solomon probably occurred in or about the year 930 B.C. Death of Solomon c. 930 B.C.

Then came a period of decline. Weaklings came to the throne. Rehoboam was unable either by strength of character, military genius, or the exercise of tact, to retain the authority of his great predecessors,

¹ 2 Kings 5¹⁷; 1 Sam. 26¹⁹.

and it was not long before the disaster in Jewish national life known as the DISRUPTION came to pass.

Jeroboam's
Revolt

Jeroboam, who had been disaffected to Solomon, and had been driven into exile, returned and headed a revolt in which he carried with him the NORTHERN KINGDOM (with Samaria as capital) and ten of the tribes of Israel.

Disruption
c. 930 B.C.

The Northern
Kingdom

The NORTHERN KINGDOM went on its way under its own line of kings. It suffered successive disasters; many of its inhabitants were deported by the Assyrians, and foreign colonists were introduced in their place so that it became a mixed race, with hardly any trace of its Jewish blood remaining. 'The lost ten tribes' vanished, some of them then—some previously—because they thus lost their national identity by intermarriage and transportation; and it was this mixture of blood that prevented the Jews of later days from having 'any dealings with Samaritans.' A similar fate, as far as external fortunes were concerned, awaited the SOUTHERN KINGDOM, with Jerusalem as its capital, and Judah and Levi as its chief remaining portions of the Jewish nation; but it resisted the crushing of its national identity, preserved the purity of its blood, and for us the subsequent interest concentrates upon its fortunes.

Southern
Kingdom

Literature at time of Disruption

The Disruption affords a convenient point in the nation's destinies at which to pause and enquire how much of our present Bible was then in existence. As far as we can ascertain there was practically none at all; none at any rate in its present form. There were, however, various records, probably mostly oral, some

possibly written down ; but only fragments of them survive.

The most ancient portion of the Old Testament appears to be the Song of Deborah (Judges 5), which dates back to about the eleventh century.

The Blessing of Jacob, Gen. 49²⁻²⁷ is about the same age, and seems to have been produced in the time of the Judges or Kings, but its author appears to have fused together several still older fragments.

There are several allusions to records which have perished. The Book of the Law of God (Joshua 24²⁶). The Book of the Wars of Jahveh (Numbers 21) which Professor Carpenter and others consider to have been a collection of poems of various ages celebrating the heroic enterprises of Israel—dating probably from the early days of the monarchy¹—i.e., about the time of the Disruption, and probably a little later.

Finally there is the Book of Jashar—or the Book of the Upright, which probably existed about the same time, and from which were taken the only portions of David's work that apparently survive, viz., the beautiful lament over Jonathan², and the quotation from the lament over Abner ;³ Professor Cheyne also thinks I Kings 8¹²⁻¹³ is quoted from the same lost record.⁴

Lastly, the writer of Numbers, 33, attributes a list of halting-places to Moses, and appears to have used some record, which he considered ancient.

There was a considerable body of traditional ' case law,' consisting of judgments or decisions, some of Torah them probably given by Moses, and others delivered

¹ Doc. of Hex., p. 30.

² II Sam. 1¹⁸⁻²⁷.

³ II Sam. 3³³⁻³⁴.

⁴ Cheyne Psalter, p. 192.

Oldest parts
of the Bible

Song of
Deborah
c. 11th century

Blessing
of Jacob
c. 11th century

Lost
literature

long after his day by influential priests, to whom disputed points were brought for settlement, at the various shrines up and down the country, at which they officiated, and which thus answered the purpose of Courts of Justice as well as places of worship; but this had not as yet been reduced to principles, nor arranged in the form in which we have it in the legal books of the Old Testament.

These decisions were known as TORAH. This body of 'case law' naturally guided future decisions, and it is in these decisions given at Jahveh's altars that we probably have the beginning of 'The Law of Moses.' His were the original decisions on which later judgments rested, and as time went on the body of case law would increase, and the later additions would be inserted under the old traditional title. The further stages in the process will be indicated as we proceed.

CHAPTER III

The Rise of the Prophets

MEANWHILE two great forces were maturing, each destined to affect the development of the nation—one external, the ASSYRIANS, the other internal, the PROPHETS.

It is impossible here to trace fully the history of the Prophets. They were associated in the earlier period of Jewish history with the local shrines in the capacity of seers or clairvoyants, and for a time were tainted by Canaanite usages much akin to the Dervish practices of to-day.¹ Subsequently they emerged not merely as seers, but as men with a strong ethical and political influence, distinctively Hebrew in their thought and sympathy, such as Samuel, Elijah, or Nathan; and finally they took up a position in the State as strenuous, religious and social reformers, with a large outlook on life and a high perception of the national destiny.

It is a very common mistake to think of them as men whose main business it was to *forecast* events, and who possessed an intimate knowledge of the future, not vouchsafed to ordinary mortals. As a matter of

¹ See for example the remarkable incident in Saul's life, I Sam. 19²⁴, and compare I Sam. 10⁶⁻¹¹.

Concerned
with present
more than
future

fact their concern was principally with their own age, with a glance at the trend of events, and an intelligent prediction of their probable future course, such as any politician or religious leader of to-day might make. Their forecasts, moreover, were not always accurate by any means, and the course of events not infrequently dashed their hopes, and disappointed their expectations.

Their Aim

Their work lay principally in the Southern Kingdom ; and after the Disruption their aim became to

Religious
centralization

centralise religion in Jerusalem. The national worship of Judah (the Southern Kingdom) had become infected by local Canaanite usages, and we hear repeated complaints of the mingling of these ' abominations ' with the service of Jahveh.

Canaanites

The Canaanites worshipped the forces of nature ;¹ they had been the original inhabitants of the land, and it must be remembered that the Jews were not definitely organised either socially or religiously at the time of their settlement.

Canaanite
shrines and
Jahveh
worship

Later on they became most rigidly exclusive, and set up the adamantine barriers of race and creed between themselves and the Gentiles. At the time, however, when the ' Promised Land ' was invaded by them there is no historical doubt that a considerable fusion by intermarriage between the invading Hebrews and the subjugated Canaanites took place, resulting inevitably in the borrowing, by the Jews, of certain religious usages which they found already established in the country. Baal and Astarte shrines became sanctuaries of Jahveh ; but, as has been stated already, many of the older heathen rites,

¹ See above p. 12

festivals, and practices were retained and adjusted to the new worship. We find that in not a few instances (as appears from the fiery denunciations of the Old Testament reformers) these older customs, endeared as they were to the people by long usage, threatened to eclipse the Hebrew religion, which had only partially supplanted them.

Perceiving the moral degeneration consequent upon these things, the Prophets bent all their energies upon discovering a remedy. They decided that the only hope lay in the abolition of all these local shrines, with their ritual of sensuality and vice, and the concentration of worship in one central sanctuary, at Jerusalem, with a definitely ordered and regulated priesthood, and an established ritual from which there could be no departure, and which would be associated with the Government. A tremendous difficulty, however, confronted them; the people had no desire to abolish the shrines. How were they to be persuaded, or compelled, to agree to the proposals of the Prophetic Party?

The
Prophetic
Remedy

The difficulty
in the way

This is where the *second* force alluded to above—Assyria—came in to turn the scale.

Its victorious armies were sweeping far and wide, and when, in the eighth century B.C., it became a menace to Israel the terror of its approach became the prophets' chief ally in their attempt to centralise religion.

Assyrian peril
comes to the
Prophets' aid

Literature

We must, however, pause for a moment. To the period during which these forces were brewing up, the writing of the earliest document in the Old Testament belongs; viz., that of the author known as the

The writing
of J,
850-750 B.C.

JAHVIST. His work is scattered through the first six books of the Old Testament, and it was evidently he (or they—for there was probably a *school* of writers whose work we group under the one name), who first set to work on the disorderly mass of national stories and traditions, and began to sort and edit them. He is the great national antiquarian, interested in all the old legends and stories told about patriarch or warrior. He tells us about the introduction of the various arts and crafts, has a knowledge of cattle breeding and agriculture, and retails the legends of the prehistoric giants, and the commencement of city building and metal work. His conception of God is very primitive. It is that of a very human deity who walks in the garden in the cool of the evening; wrestles with Jacob; shuts the door of the ark on Noah; and, filled with dread at the audacity of the builders of Babel, comes down to confound their speech.¹ A deity in short who is a magnified man with Strength, Wisdom, and Passions, on a gigantic scale.

The writer is known as the Jahvist because he uses the name Jahveh (generally rendered Jehovah) as the designation of God.

This is the earliest continuous and connected narrative we have in the Bible; and into it the author wove fragments of the ancient material he had used, such as 'The Song of Deborah' and 'The Blessing of Jacob' alluded to above.

J gives us the first or earliest form of the Ten Commandments ascribed to Moses. They are not the Decalogue we generally associate with the lawgiver. They are more akin to Arab customs that exist to-day.

¹ Gen. 11⁵, 18²¹, 32²⁴; Ex. 3⁸, 19¹¹⁻²⁰, 34⁵, 4²⁴.

J does not produce them in their ancient form—but apparently had them before him either in memory or in writing, and partly quoted, partly amplified them. The nearest reconstruction we can get of the essential points is as follows:—

1. Thou shalt worship no other god, Ex. 34¹⁴⁻¹⁶.
2. Thou shalt make thee no molten gods, ¹⁷.
3. The feast of unleavened bread shalt thou keep, ¹⁸⁻²⁰.
4. Every firstling is mine, ¹⁹⁻²⁰.
5. Thou shalt observe the Feast of Weeks, ²¹ (1st part).
6. And the Feast of Ingathering of Harvest, ²² (2nd part).
7. Thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leaven, ²⁵ (1st part).
8. The fat of the feast must not be left over till morning, ²⁵ (2nd part).
9. The best of the firstfruits to be brought to the House of Jahveh, ²⁶ (1st part).
10. Thou shalt not seethe a kid in its mother's milk, ²⁶ (2nd part).¹

But these commandments are clearly stated to be *the Covenant written on the tables of stone, and to be the same as those written on the first tables* (Ex. 34¹). This early form of the Commandments, which dates before the eighth century, may have been a brief summary of the principles laid down in the ancient Torah of Moses (see p. 15), but it is of far later date than Moses. In Exodus xxxiv. we have the earliest body of principles for the regulation of the national life; and it is evidently designed to meet the needs of primitive people. (For its further development see p. 23).

¹ *Driver*, Intro. to Old Test., p. 37. It is considered by some that 5 and 6 should be grouped as one and that the command to keep the Sabbath should be the sixth.

Elohist
800-750 B.C.

Soon after J had taken his work in hand, a second writer appears, known as the ELOHIST, so called because he always speaks of God under the Hebrew term ELOHIM (literally *Gods*). His date may be fixed probably not later than 750 B.C.

It seems probable that he was a Northerner, as he manifested particular interest in the local shrines in the North. His conception of God is less crude than that of J. In his writings, which, like those of J are also scattered through the first six books of the Old Testament, God is generally represented as appearing by means of dreams, angels, in a pillar of cloud or fire, in a burning bush, etc. ; for the crude naturalness of the Jahvist was somewhat repugnant to the more refined taste of the later writer, who, moreover, had a distinctly theological bias. The nation was developing, and its conception of the divine was becoming less intimate.

The First
Legislation

The religious and social rules that were in vogue at the time of the Elohist may be seen in what is often called the Book of the Covenant, or the First Legislation, viz., Ex. 21-23. It was the first attempt (or at any rate the first we possess) on the part of the Jews to draw up a set of rules for ordering national life. 'These are the judgments thou shalt set before them,' says the author, and the judgments are simple, straightforward rules for directing the affairs and disputes of a primitive people, regulating the relations of master and slave, parent and children, men and women, compensation for injuries, settlement of disputes, etc., and giving us the oft-quoted principle 'an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, wound

for wound, stripe for stripe.’¹ It also makes regulations for the cultivation of land, and decrees a rest for it every seventh year. In this early legislation there is no uncertain sound with regard to monotheism and idolatry—‘He that sacrificeth unto any other god but the Lord God, shall be utterly destroyed.’²

But note, *at this time God might be worshipped anywhere*. Ex. 20²⁴⁻²⁶ gives full directions and sanctions for the building of local altars of earth or unhewn stones. Any head of a family in early Hebrew times might build the altar and make the sacrifice, and it is distinctly set forth that ‘in every place where I record my name, I will come unto thee and I will bless thee.’

In the same chapter E gives *his* version of the Ten Commandments—quite a different one from the Jahvist (see p. 21). It is in fact almost the same form as in Deuteronomy, except that the motive for keeping the Sabbath day is different. It is to be hallowed as a reminder of God’s rest after the task of creation.

Second
stage of the
Ten Com-
mandments

The Assyrians and the Prophets

Meanwhile, during this period of nascent literary activity, the Assyrian peril was becoming more immanent year by year. From the great Babylonian empire Assyria had split off about 2,300 B.C. It had spread along the rivers Euphrates and Tigris, and, increasing steadily in power, had grown strong enough a thousand years later, to conquer its mighty parent Babylon. Nation after nation fell a prey to its wide-sweeping armies, or to those of Egypt; till at length, in the middle of the

Assyria

¹ Ex. 21²⁴⁻²⁵. ² Ex. 22²⁰.

eighth century, a similar disaster began to seem inevitable to the Jewish people.

Amos

765-750 B.C.

At this juncture AMOS came forward in the Northern Kingdom (Samaria) ; and at Bethel, one of its principal shrines, uttered his warning 'that Jeroboam shall die by the sword, and Israel shall be carried away from its land.' The result of his warning was that he was driven into exile, and took refuge in the Southern Kingdom of Judah. The date of his utterance is about 765-750.

Hosea

743-734 B.C.

He was followed by HOSEA, whose lonely utterances give us a lurid picture of the degradation of both priesthood and prophets, together with the mingling of Jahveh and Baal worship in the Northern Kingdom, of which apparently he was a native, and in which his work lay. The Assyrian peril was drawing nearer, and he foretold the utter destruction of the nation as a judgment for its neglect of true worship and morality.

Micah

735-700 B.C.

Meanwhile, MICAH took up the burden of woe in the South ; and we owe to his utterances a picture of the social conditions of the people of Judah—the break-up of agricultural life ; the crowding of the population in cities ; the opening up of trade with the Mediterranean coast ; the increasing wealth of the nobility ; the wretchedness of the people, oppressed, neglected, and impotent. All this he cried must end in the devastation and destruction of the country. The utterances included under his name cover a period of about thirty-five years, viz., 735-700.

Isaiah

c. 740 B.C.

The work of his greater contemporary, ISAIAH, covers much the same period, and the smaller voices of his predecessors and contemporaries seem gathered up and lost in his passionate pleadings and his storm-

ful threats of doom. He began his work about the year 740; but it should be remembered, in alluding to Isaiah's date, that not the whole of the writings that bear his name are from his hand. This will be indicated later, and the various parts of the Book of Isaiah dated approximately. The portion that belongs to this period is the Earlier Isaiah (chapters 1-23, and 28-31), but it is obvious that our *present arrangement* of these chapters is later than Isaiah's time. They are made up of various utterances that were collected, and arranged, with editorial additions, after the Exile.

First Isaiah
Chapters
23 and 28-31

The Northern Kingdom was the first to feel the shock of the Assyrian tide of conquest. It was invaded and made a vassal State by Tiglath-pileser in 738 B.C. Sixteen years later it made a valiant but ineffective attempt to regain its freedom, and Assyria in revenge dismembered it. Samaria, after enduring siege for three years by Shalmaneser, was finally stormed by his successor Sargon in 722 B.C., when twenty-seven thousand of the inhabitants were deported, and foreigners introduced in their place. The fate of the Northern Kingdom added point and significance to the exhortations of both Isaiah and Micah, and to that object-lesson the temporary improvement in the Southern Kingdom, and the subsequent reform, were at any rate partially due. The political situation was used by the Prophetic Party to the utmost, and they endeavoured to show the nation that the threatened peril of a foreign foe was the result of national wrong-doing and unfaithfulness, and that safety lay only in repentance and amendment.¹

Destruction
of the
Northern
kingdom

Fall of
Samaria
722 B.C.

¹ See for example Isaiah 10¹⁻¹¹, etc.

A century's
respite in the
Southern
kingdom

The great tide which had overwhelmed Samaria had lapped the shore of Judah, but it ebbed once more, and the Southern Kingdom enjoyed a century's respite before its doom was also sealed. In that century, however, a great deal was accomplished. On one occasion Sennacherib, the Assyrian monarch, advanced upon Jerusalem, but trouble elsewhere compelled him to withdraw his forces.

The effect of this deliverance upon the popular mind may be imagined ; particularly as Isaiah had predicted its occurrence.

Triumph
of the
Prophetic
Party

The retreat of Sennacherib meant the triumph of the Prophetic Party ; and the question presented itself as to how the position might be turned to account. For years they had desired to centralise worship in Jerusalem, but the local shrines had many adherents ; they were historic institutions, and moreover they were highly popular. Josiah was king, Hilkiyah high-priest. It was obviously to the advantage of the latter to have the power of the Jerusalem Temple increased. It was equally to the advantage of Josiah to consolidate his kingdom by centralising and controlling religion. So the Prophetic Party put their reforming ideas into writing, and brought them forward under the name of Moses, the great traditional leader and teacher, whose personality still loomed large in the popular mind. What actually occurred is narrated in II Kings 22. Hilkiyah approached the king, informing him that an ancient book of Moses had been discovered in the Temple, which showed how entirely wrong the course of national life had been. The people had been suffering the consequences of this, and an immediate reform was necessary. The new law—

The Book in
the Temple

' the second law '—was duly promulgated and adopted, and Josiah put its precepts into practice and decreed the destruction of the ancient shrines.¹

This book was that which we know as Deuteronomy ; or, to be more exact, it was Deut. 12-26. Deuteronomy
(Chap. 12-26)
621 B.C. The introduction and conclusion were added later. Deuteronomy marks an important step in the national history ; it was undoubtedly in advance of all previous legislation. It endeavoured to establish definitely the worship of one God, and one God only ; and to that end it decreed, for the first time in Hebrew history that Jahveh should be worshipped in *one place*, according to *one settled ritual*, that the ministrants of the Temple should be limited to *one tribe*, the Levites. Centralisation It codified the collection of case law or Torah into definite principles and rules for application to national affairs, and the regulation of individual conduct ; and anyone reading it must be struck by the enlightened character of its regulations as to hygiene. Upon the shrines and altars which the writer of Ex. 20²⁴⁻²⁶ had given directions how to construct—upon the local sanctuaries, at which Samuel, Gideon, David, and in fact everyone, had worshipped, thinking it no harm—and, above all, upon the Canaanite shrines, the Deuteronomic writer pours forth invective and wrath, and decrees for them utter destruction.² His conception of God was more lofty and less intimate than that of J or E ; and the book was above all characterized by a more humane

¹ How widespread and uncensured the old custom of the worshipper sacrificing on his own account at the local sanctuary may be seen by examining the following references :—I Sam. 14³⁴⁻³⁵ ; II Sam. 6¹⁷⁻¹⁸ ; I Kings 18 ; Judges 6²⁴⁻²⁶, 13¹⁹, etc.

² Deut. 12, 17, 18, etc.

Progressive
Spirit

Ten Com-
mandments,
3rd stage

spirit, towards both men and animals, than had been known before. The writer adopted the Ten Commandments of E (see p. 21), but the motive for keeping the Sabbath was a humanitarian one for the first time, 'That thy manservant and thy maid-servant may have rest as well as thou; and thou shalt remember that thou wast a servant,' etc.¹ The Book was in fact the first great attempt of the reforming party to abolish abuses, secure law and order in the land, to purify worship, and to weld the nation into a united people, keeping themselves separate and distinct from other nations, and maintaining a lofty ideal of personal righteousness.

Habakkuk
626-609 B.C.

The message of the prophet Habakkuk was uttered soon after the date of the Deuteronomic reformation, and is full of the terror of the Chaldeans—'that bitter and hasty nation which shall march through the breadth of the land.' He also dwells on the increasing corruption and iniquity of the country, and the confidence of the righteous that God will turn all the trouble and pain to use and purpose. Yet with a wonderful faith of the ultimate triumph of right the prophet cries, even in the midst of famine, pestilence, and death, 'I will rejoice in the Lord—I will joy in the God of my salvation.' But it is very evident from the tone of his message that Deuteronomy was an ideal that was as yet far from realized.

Particularly remarkable, as showing a great advance of thought in regard to the idea of God, is the passage in which Habakkuk claims that even the great Gentile empires are working out, unconsciously to themselves, the wider purposes of God; that what is built on blood

¹ Deut. 5.

and iniquity will not endure; and that eventually 'the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.'¹ Such a thought would have been impossible in the earlier days of the Jews, and is a landmark in their history.

Meanwhile the prophet Nahum, rejoicing at the downfall of Thebes (No-Amon), anticipated and foretold in lurid detail and with dreadful vividness a similar fate for the great city of Nineveh. His allusions to the two events enable us to fix his date as about the year 626 B.C. Nahum
626 B.C.

About the same time Jeremiah began his public work. Jeremiah

Born of a priestly family about the year 650 B.C., Born
c. 650 B.C. he began his career as reformer when about twenty-five years of age. He lived in a time of national tumult and terror, and he was an eye-witness of the storm of Jerusalem by Nebuchadrezzar, in 597 B.C. His message was spoken in a time of unsettlement and fear, when invasion from various quarters was threatening the Jews; for to the terror of Egypt and Assyria was added that of the wide-sweeping masses of the wild Scythian hordes who overran Asia Minor about this time, leaving desolation in their track.² The Scythian
peril

The whole of Syria in fact became a veritable whirlpool in which the cross currents of contending empires and nationalities met in horrible and awe-inspiring confusion. It is little wonder that the prophets talked of universal judgment, and the end of all things.

¹ Hab. 2¹²⁻¹⁴.

² The following references in Jer. are believed to refer to the Scythians, 5¹⁵⁻¹⁷, 6¹⁻⁸, and 22-25.

Jeremiah's
Message

The message of Jeremiah was one of vengeance and woe on a guilty people false to their God; and it is particularly noteworthy that in his thought the scope of Jahveh's power and action has become world wide, and the nations are all instruments in the divine hands; for the tribal God of early Jewish belief had taken on grander proportions—'Do not I fill Heaven and Earth,' saith the Lord. It is the same thought as that of Habakkuk. The days were at an end when David considered banishment as equivalent to a compulsion to worship another God;¹ or the cleansed Naaman begged for 'two mules' burden of earth,'² in order that he might build an altar to the worship of Jahveh in a foreign land (the presence of God being regarded as bound up with the soil of Palestine); or when the departure of the ark captured in battle was equivalent to the departure of Jahveh himself. Larger and ever larger claims for the God of Israel had been made by the Prophetic Party, until his dominion had become world-wide.

The idea of
Jahveh's
power
enlarged

Jeremiah
Chaps. 1-29

It is undoubted that Jeremiah is a historical figure; but it is probable that the actual reduction of the oracles he uttered to written form may have been the work of the Prophetic Guild. Like Isaiah the portions of the book which bear his name are of varying date, but chapters 1-29 belong to this period, though put in their present form somewhat later; and anyone reading them, with their historical setting in mind, will see the influence of contemporary events—the horrors of invasion, siege and massacre, the fugitives hiding in the rocks, the devastated harvests, the ruined cities,

¹ 1 Sam. 26¹⁹. ² 2 Kings 5¹⁷.

the starving populace—a veritable maelstrom of passion, misery, vice, and crime, with the Divine Power working through it all, and accomplishing its inscrutable purposes.

It is now generally agreed that the threatened invasion of the Scythians alluded to above was the cause and inspiration of Zephaniah's utterances. Zephaniah
625-600 B.C.

The coming judgment of the world is still the main theme, for him as for his predecessors, and the meek, the poor, and the righteous will be sifted out of Israel, and the remainder doomed to deserved destruction. From various references in the first chapter to false prophets, and heathen customs and idolatry, it is clear that the mixed religion was still rife in the land. These abuses, however, according to Zephaniah, were destined to speedy destruction; the most persistent foes of Israel—the Assyrians, Moabites, Ammonites, and Philistines¹—would be overthrown, and eventually the purged nation would dwell in peace.²

It is clear from the references in Jeremiah, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah that the Deuteronomic reformation, great as is its importance in the development of Jewish thought and life, did not at the time effect any very considerable change in the nation. The transition had been too rapid and violent; and scarcely had it been accomplished when the inevitable reaction which always follows sudden changes set in. The people began to lapse into the old ways which had become ingrained so deeply into the national life; the broken shrines were rebuilt, and the forbidden worship resumed. The Surface
Reformation
and the
National
Downfall

The international situation, however, was becoming

¹ 24.15.

² 319.

more threatening year by year, and it was not long before a fresh disaster overtook the unfortunate race. This time Egypt was the aggressor. Assyria and Egypt were at this time engaged in hostilities, and the Egyptians claimed Judah as a vassal state. The Jews refused submission and led by Josiah went forth to fight, only to suffer disastrous defeat at Megiddo in 608 B.C.

Egypt claims
overlordship
of Judah

Battle of Meg-
iddo 608 B.C.

Reaction
against
Prophets

Josiah was slain, and his army completely routed ; a strong reaction set in against the reforming party in the disabled state—a reaction which no prophetic fervour could stem for the time being, and which appears to have swept away all that Deuteronomy had striven to accomplish.

CHAPTER IV.

Babylonian Period, 597-555 B.C.

BUT now a new element appeared upon the scene.

Ancient Babylon had risen in its might against its rebellious offspring, Assyria, and having swept the Assyrian power on one side assumed the predominant position in the political horizon. It crushed Egypt at the battle of Carchemish in 604 B.C., and shortly afterwards its hosts invaded Palestine, leaving ruin in their track. Jerusalem was stormed in 597 B.C. by Nebuchadrezzar, and a large number of captives carried away to Babylonia. Shortly after the retreat of the Babylonian army the remnant who remained in Jerusalem raised a revolt, but were swiftly and ruthlessly crushed; and in 586 B.C. with a further large deportation the utter ruin of the State was complete. The captives were taken to Babylonia, and there they remained for about fifty years—in many ways the most notable half-century in Jewish history.

Battle of
Carchemish
604 B.C.

Exile 586 B.C.

Literature at commencement of Exile

At this time the following literature was possessed by the exiles. The Jahvist and Elohist records; the New Law of the Deuteronomist, part of Jeremiah—roughly speaking the greater portion of chapters 1-37, but even in these chapters various passages belong

J. & E.;
Deuteronomy;
Jeremiah 1-37

34 Babylonian Period, 597-555 B.C.

to still later dates ; the material, in fact, existed in fragmentary form, and was *subsequently* edited and rearranged at various times by later hands. A portion of Isaiah was also in existence, roughly chapters 1-23, but what has already been said with regard to Isaiah 1-23, but what has already been said with regard to Jeremiah applies to these chapters also. Amos, Hosea, Micah, Habakkuk, Nahum, and Zephaniah had also delivered their messages ; and just before and immediately after the Exile the Deuteronomic school were busy editing and writing the national histories, which we know under the titles of the Books of Kings, Samuel, and Judges.

These books bear traces of many hands in their composition, but they existed in the main before the Exile, and may be roughly dated as between 680 and 580—but it should be borne in mind that after the Exile they were considerably re-edited, altered and additions inserted. This indeed was a process to which all the Old Testament writings were continually subject until they took their final form some centuries later.

Such was the literary property of the Jews when they found themselves, at the beginning of a new era in their history, torn away from their homes and hurried in sorrowful procession, escorted by their fierce captors, into a foreign land to commence another momentous chapter in their development.

The Exile

Consider the position. A large fragment of a nation carried away to a foreign land, and placed in the midst of a wonderful civilisation, whose records reached back to the dim dawn of history ; a land of mighty traditions, and marvellous buildings, whose

Isaiah 1-23

Amos, Hosea,
Micah,
Habakkuk,
Zephaniah,
Nahum

Kings
Samuel
Judges
680-580 B.C.

The Babylonian Empire

Babylonian Period, 597–555 B.C. 35

ruins still lie in mounded heaps, over a hundred feet high after the lapse of more than two thousand years. The temples were enormous and the ceremonial gorgeous; the priests efficiently organized, and well provided for; not depending merely upon voluntary offerings, but supported by state endowment. They were powerful not merely religiously but politically as well. In addition to their priestly functions they were the possessors of whatever scientific knowledge was then extant, and their astronomical observations were astonishingly accurate; to their care also the national records were committed; and all legal business rested with them. The Babylonian priesthood in short might well impress the exiles most deeply with the value and potency of ecclesiastical organization.

Babylonian
Priesthood

Through the great city of Babylon itself ran the river Euphrates, and the city was surrounded by a mighty wall 300 feet high, 50 miles in circumference, and 50 feet wide at the top. There was a wonderful and intricate defensive system of canals and walls within the protecting circuit of this mighty rampart; it was in short a wonderful civilization, which amazed even the Greeks when they conquered it at a later date.

The City

At the period of the Exile, Babylonia was in its most splendid period; a time of brilliant revival, though it lasted for little more than a century: a dazzling sunset glory.

Into this flourishing empire the little community of exiles was plunged; in it they maintained their separateness for half a century, and many of them for an even longer time. Most colonists were absorbed under such conditions, and lost their nationality.

Nationality
not lost, but
accentuated

36 Babylonian Period, 597-555 B.C.

With the Jews the effect was quite the reverse; it united, purged, purified them, and accentuated their nationality.

To what are we to attribute this effect? The reply is—to Deuteronomy, and the Prophetic Party, who were powerfully represented among those who were deported. Jeremiah, who had suffered persecution at the hands of his own countrymen, was swept off with them into exile, as was also Ezekiel, then little more than a boy.

It is one of the paradoxes of human nature that we never really appreciate a thing until we have lost it. So a section at all events of the Jews, having lost their land became burning patriots, and having neglected their religion at home became zealots for it in exile.

Literary and Devotional activity during Exile

It was a period of intense religious and literary activity, and during its continuance some of the finest devotional literature in the world was produced. Priest and Prophet set to work to codify and collect all the old traditions and laws of religious observance, for use when the restoration should come.

Ezekiel The utterances of Ezekiel belong to this time, and with him the Priestly element in the Prophetic Party comes powerfully to the front. The spirit of religious organization that lay behind the production of Deuteronomy finds a fuller utterance in his plans and ideas for the new Temple, and the reorganized Jerusalem, a vivid sketch of which he gives in chapters 40-48.

The most unsatisfactory part of his writing, with its bewildering wealth of imagery, is his treatment of the final judgment, chapters 38-39. Israel

is to be restored, for it is the chosen nation ; afterwards there is to be a general gathering of the nations under Gog, the king of Magog, and a wholesale slaughter is to take place ; it will take Israel seven months to bury the dead. A narrower and more terrible conception of Deity than that to which Ezekiel descends in these chapters is difficult to imagine ; there is a calculating savagery about it which makes one shudder. The nations have been God's instruments for the punishment of Israel, and having done their work they must suffer for it ; and so Jehovah is represented as stirring them up under Gog, in order that they may be offered up in myriads in the Syrian hills and as a sacrifice to Hebrew outraged pride, and a vindication of God's honour—'They shall know that I am Jahveh.' The account is important as being the seed from which later on, under Persian influence, the doctrines of the Last Judgment and the end of the world were evolved. Ezekiel was both priest and prophet in utterance and in instinct, but with a narrower outlook than some of his party.

Origin of the
'Final Judgment'

Allowance, however, must be made for the fact that he lived in and suffered through the terrible time of the storm and destruction of Jerusalem, and the forcible uprooting of the entire nation. Greatly as some of his blood-curdling views—and the similar views expressed in some of the Psalms—shock our modern sense, they must be read not as sentiment to be admired, but as landmarks, in the old writings, of a time of seething passions and intense hatred ; not inspirations of God—but intense expressions of human feelings in a long dead past.

38 Babylonian Period, 597–555 B.C.

Psalms

During this wonderful period of fifty years, some of our existing Psalms were written, full of yearning for return to the ancestral home, and ancestral worship; and possibly other and older pieces of Hebrew poetry were collected and added.

The whole question of the origin and structure of the Psalter is very complex. Speaking broadly the Psalms fall into four main divisions:—

1. 'Davidic' collection, Psalms 1-41 [Fifth Century B.C.]

2. Second 'Davidic' collection, Psalms 51-72 [later].

3. A Levitical collection, 42-50, and 73-83 (to these 84-89 were added later; and the whole collection, i.e. 42-89 was completed about 380-330 B.C.).

4. A later collection, 90-150 [Third Century B.C]. Some of the first 'Davidic' collection were possibly written before the Exile, and sung in the Temple by the Sons of Asaph.

David and The Psalms

That David wrote them *all* is certainly not the fact; that he wrote *any* of them is to say the least improbable. Undoubtedly a musical and lyrical reputation was associated with David, but neither the spirit nor the subject matter of our existing Psalms seem to fit the language, circumstances or culture of David's age. The only two fragments of his work which Professor Cheyne will admit as surviving in the Old Testament are II Sam. 1¹⁹⁻²⁷, 3^{33, 34f.}

The probability seems to be that the compilation of a rough collection of sacred songs was undertaken by the *command* of David, and called after him for that reason, and as subsequent additions were made they were added under his name. The first two groups mentioned above were possibly in course of

formation by the end of the Exile, but the date of these hymns for the Temple Service would appear to be *after* the Return—at any rate in their existing form and arrangement; though some of them may have been written somewhat earlier. The two remaining groups belong to later periods.

But even the literary record pales before the national record of the Exile; for in those years the Jews acquired their extraordinary capacity of retaining their identity and separateness as a nation, with no country to call their own.

A Nation
without a
Country

One of the greatest forces that assisted in making this retention of nationality possible was the synagogue. Having been torn from their own land the Jews were no longer able to continue the legitimate national worship; they were accordingly forced to find some other outlet for religious life, and the institution of the Synagogue appears to have been the answer found to this new need. We have very little information about its actual beginnings, but it would originate naturally enough in the gathering of the people round well-known priestly exiles for instruction and advice, on civil matters and on the religion which they were now beginning to value as they had never done before. It was probably regarded as a mere temporary expedient by the exiles, and those who then instituted the Synagogue little guessed what a tremendous force they were launching into the life and development of their race. It is not improbable that some of the earlier psalms were composed for, and chanted in these Babylonian meeting-houses.

Origin of
Synagogue

CHAPTER V

Persian Period, 555-332 B.C.

Exile

Persia 555 B.C.

A fresh turn of the great wheel of Destiny resulted in a change of fortune for the Jews, and seemed to bring the prophetic visions nearer realization. Nabonidus, King of Babylon, had attempted a reform not unlike that of Deuteronomy in Israel. He had striven to centralize religion in Babylon, and having incurred the hatred of the powerful priesthood had been murdered. His son strove to carry on the Government, but Cyrus, and his victorious Persian army, flushed with victory after victory, appeared before the gates; they were opened to him by treachery, and he took bloodless possession of the city 555 B.C. Babylonia and Israel with it passed under Persian control.

Cyrus

Cyrus was above all things tolerant and a new era of hope seemed to dawn for the exiles.

Isaiah 40-48

'Comfort ye, comfort ye,' sang the writer who is generally called the Second Isaiah, and whose contribution to the Book begins at chapter 40, with those ringing words telling Israel that her warfare is accomplished, her iniquity pardoned, and her sins doubly punished, and so atoned for.

The chapters that follow contain a beautiful description of the power and majesty of the Most High,

full of splendid natural imagery—The blind and the deaf nation shall be made to see and hear at last, and realize ‘I, even I, am the Lord—beside me there is no Saviour’ (43¹¹), and Cyrus is hailed as the anointed of the Lord, ‘whose right hand I have holden to subdue nations before him.’ (45¹)

This group of chapters extends from 40-48.

The policy of Cyrus might be summed up in the word *conciliation*. He honoured all the gods; and permitted many of the deported settlers from various lands to return home, among them a number of the Jews.

Return to Jerusalem 537 B.C.

In 537 B.C. some thousands of the exiles returned, leaving the larger number still in Babylonia. They found foreign settlers in the land; colonists who had themselves been deported from elsewhere—and who were not overjoyed to see the return of the former owners of the soil. The prophets had given a wonderful picture of a triumphant and brilliant restoration, but it was a prophecy which was never verified. It was a home-coming to a cold hearthstone, and a ruined country. The altar was set up and the foundation-stone of a new Temple laid, and then, probably because of dispute with the alien colonists, all work was stopped. For sixteen years we hear and know nothing; then the silence was broken at last by the two prophets, almost the last of that great guild, Haggai and Zechariah, who endeavoured to rekindle the national enthusiasm; and under the lash of their words the work of rebuilding was recommenced.

The first
return of
exiles

A desolate
Home coming

Persian
Period

Haggai and
Zechariah
521 B.C.

It was under these circumstances that chapters

42 Persian Period, 555-332 B.C.

Isaiah 49-55 were added to the existing portions of Isaiah. There is some difficulty in assigning them definitely to this date, and some have thought they belong to the end of the Exile rather than to this age. But, as Professor Cheyne points out,¹ the evidence seems to indicate the fact that 'the passages in question were written in Babylonia by a writer of the Second Isaiah school, with an eye to the circumstances in Judæa to encourage sorely tried workers in Jerusalem, such as Haggai, Malachi, and Zechariah.'

'Put on thy beautiful garments, O holy city,' cries the writer. 'Henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean. Shake thyself from the dust. Arise. . . .' But chapters 58 and 59 indicate that even the affliction of the captivity had not purged the nation and its religion of all undesirable elements. They are reminded in the most fiery and direct terms that neither outward observances with little meaning, nor neglecting all observances, will bring a blessing. These chapters are like a later echo of the first chapter of Isaiah, which was uttered about two centuries before. History was repeating itself.

The Suffering
Servant Into this twofold group of writings (chap. 40-48 and chap. 49-55) there are inserted several passages known as the Songs of the Suffering Servant.

They occur as follows: 42¹⁻⁴, 49¹⁻⁶, 50⁴⁻⁹, and 52¹³ to 53¹².

Isaiah 42¹⁻⁴,
49¹⁻⁶, 50⁴⁻⁹,
52¹³-53¹² They have up to comparatively recent times been thought of as prophecies of the Messiah.

The vast majority of Biblical scholars of to-day have agreed to abandon that theory, and these passages

¹ Encyl. Bib. vii. 2204.

are now considered as referring to some of the many sufferers for their religious opinions—the reformers in Israel who, like all reformers, suffered martyrdom and persecution at the hands of their countrymen. The events described were already past and over, the victim had ‘poured out his soul unto death,’ and the writer could already trace some of the sanctifying and uplifting effects of his self-sacrifice; and could feel that though his grave had been made with the wicked, yet he had enriched the national life; could say that by his stripes they were healed of some of the sin and selfishness which had tainted Israel. The Prophetic Party could remember not a few who had loved country and religion more than life to whom the well-known words of Is. 53 could be applied.

These passages date probably after the Return to Jerusalem, and they have been inserted into their present position by some later editor who conducted a revision of Isaiah.

Ensuing on the efforts of the Prophets and of Zerubbabel the governor, who appears to have been a descendant of David, building operations were once more commenced, and four years later the new House of God was complete, and the dedication took place with great joy.

Dedication of
Temple
517 B.C.

Then again all work stopped, or at any rate we have no record of events, for a further space of sixty years; and many of the Jews, sickened and disheartened at the repeated delays, fell away, and contracted marriages with the imported foreign settlers.

Sixty years'
silence

Thus eighty years had elapsed since the return of the first exiles, when a fresh impulse came from the Jewish colony remaining in Babylon. During this

44 Persian Period, 555-332 B.C.

Activity of
priests in
exile

A new Book
of Law

time the Priestly Party among the Babylonian Jews had gained in power and grown in strictness. They had compiled a new Book of the Law, more stringent in its regulations than Deuteronomy had been, partly legal, partly historical, partly ritual in its character, and written from the standpoint of the priest, and largely, it must be allowed, to the advantage of the priest.

The lessons of the powerful priesthood of Babylon, who were the chief wire pullers in the political movements of the vast empire, had not been lost on them, and the new book of the law embodied the aspirations of the Prophetic Party; the dreams of Ezekiel, of a new Jerusalem; and the ambitions and ideas of the zealous Priestly exiles.

Ezra
458 B.C.

Armed with this new embodiment of national and religious duty, there came to Jerusalem in 458 B.C. Ezra the scribe, one of the Priestly family of Zadok; with him he brought royal authority to repair and decorate the Temple; and together with about 1,000 companions he arrived at Jerusalem. He was filled with horror at the condition of things—particularly at the foreign marriages. A solemn conclave was called and met in a drenching downpour of rain, and their dreadful departures from the national law were made known to the people.

The second
return of
exiles

Revolt against
Ezra

The newly-arrived extremists, fresh to all the local conditions, but aflame with zeal ordered the divorce of all the alien wives, and thereby aroused general hostility. Ezra had gone too far, and Jew and Gentile alike rebelled against the harsh decree. Again, there is silence for a period of twelve years, during which time nothing seems to have been accomplished.

Twelve years'
silence

In 444 B.C. Nehemiah arrived, and under his force-
ful personality the walls were rebuilt and Jerusalem
restored. Then the Priestly Party once more re-
asserted itself; the people were again gathered together
and ordered to dissolve their marriages with foreigners,
and the New Law alluded to in p. 44 was read aloud
to them—the reading extending over seven days,
alternating with prayers and psalm-singing. Once
again this law was said to be that of Moses, and
finally the people bound themselves by an oath and
a curse to obey it.

Nehemiah
444 B.C.
Third band of
returning
exiles

Literature

What was the New Law? Do we possess it?

It was the document which runs through the first
six books of the Bible known as P. It was written
during the exile, promulgated in 444 B.C., and com-
prises, roughly speaking, some eleven chapters in
Genesis, nineteen in Exodus, the whole of Leviticus,
and twenty-eight chapters in Numbers.

The Priestly
Writer
555-444 B.C.

The following are some of the characteristic points
of the new legislation, which mark it off clearly from
the earlier national laws of Exodus 21-23, and
Deuteronomy :—

1. In Deuteronomy all Levites are priests—in the
Priests' Law only the family of Aaron are priests,
and the rest of Levi merely Temple servants (Num-
bers 8¹⁹).

2. The firstlings instead of being eaten by the
worshipper, as in Deuteronomy, are to be given to
the priests (Numbers 18¹⁸).

3. Tithes, which were originally a provision for
the sacred festivals to be eaten by the worshipper,

are now to be paid as a due to the Levites, who in turn must pay out of it a tenth to the priests (Lev. 27³²; Numbers 18).

4. Towns and lands are assigned for the first time to the ecclesiastical body.

5. The great Day of Atonement is instituted to insure that due atonement and sacrifice, etc., may be made to God for all national and individual sins; it is an annual institution for national cleansing and purification.

6. Deuteronomy had made the admittance of strangers into the nation a difficulty. Leviticus makes it easier, but on definite terms. The foreigner can become an Israelite by performing the prescribed national ritual, and conforming to Jewish practices.

7. Besides all this the most elaborate provisions as to ritual observances, temple fittings, details of worship and conduct are made.

The whole scheme, in fact, is a wonderful piece of ecclesiastical organization, as different from the earliest laws as it well could be, and its most striking characteristic is its attitude towards nationality and priesthood. Both are fenced round by the most elaborate precautions to preserve their purity.

A new standard of nationality

By this legislation of the Priestly Party a new standard of nationality was set up. A Jew was Jew not merely by virtue of birth or country, *he was a Jew so long as the Law was observed and no longer*. It is this Law which has made it possible for the Jews to maintain their separateness and unity for centuries, though disinherited, scattered over the world, and with no land to call their own.

¹ Isaiah 56-63⁶, and 64¹⁻³ and 66.

Not long afterwards the documents J.E.D. and P. J.E.D.P. were combined into the continuous narrative of the first six books of the Old Testament, which thus assumed for the first time, almost the form in which we now know them. The Mosaic authorship was assumed, both as a literary device to add unity, and an ecclesiastical device to add authority to the whole.¹ documents combined

During the age of Nehemiah further additions were made to the Book of Isaiah, notably chapters 56-66;² a fitting ending to the writings, in a note of hope and promise combined with reproof and exhortation. c. 444 B.C.

The First 'Davidic' collection of Psalms assumed its present shape, and was used in the services of the restored temple at about this time.

The second group of Psalms had also been collected and edited by the Priestly Party, and we can still trace their handiwork in alterations made in the original text. Psalms 51-72 appear to have been collected first—then a further collection, consisting of 42-50, and 73-83, was made, and the two sets were combined and edited by the Priestly Party somewhere between 380-330 B.C.—that is in the latter part of the Persian period. Psalms 84-89 were added at, or immediately before, this final revision. Psalms 430-330 B.C. (groups 2 and 3 alluded to on p. 34)

These groupings are not to be regarded as existing *absolutely* in their present form—in some cases psalms of a still later date have been inserted in them.

In reading the various Psalms it should always be borne in mind that they are *national* poetry, and that they accordingly express far more than the inward experience of any single individual. The writer may use the first person singular, but he is

¹ For a full illustration of this, see Appendix.

² Except Isaiah 63⁷-64¹², see p. 51.

gathering into his own person the passions of an age and the experiences of a race. It should also be remembered that the unfortunate exiles were not all of them living together in one city, but were scattered in various parts of Babylonia, widely separated from one another, and thus made to feel the humiliation and isolation of their position all the more keenly. Moreover, some remnants of the nation still remained in Palestine, surrounded with foreign colonists, and at the mercy of their hereditary enemies, 'the nations round about,' who did not scruple to use to the full the opportunity thus afforded of paying off old scores with their one time strong and haughty Jewish neighbours.

It is this background of national misfortune, oppression, disaster, and humiliation that lies behind a great many of the psalms,¹ and accounts for their intense bitterness and hatred of the enemies of the Lord and of Israel. This policy of persecution, plunder, and arrogance continued from about 600 B.C. for several centuries; cropping out particularly in the time of Ezra and Nehemiah; and when it to some extent ceased, the task of harrying Israel was taken up by other hands.

Lamentations
not earlier
than 470 B.C.

The Book of Lamentations should be mentioned in connexion with the hymns for temple service. It is probable that these chants were used in the temple service in the third century B.C.—the various sections

¹ This applies particularly to the first two collections and to some of the songs in the later compilations. Professor Cheyne mentions in particular the following psalms as showing this gloomy background of persecution: 2, 18, 20, 21, 35, 42, 43, 44, 49, 60, 61, 63, 73, 74, 79, 110, 137. (The dates of these vary considerably.)

are of different date and probably of diverse authorship ; but it is fairly well agreed now that no part of the collection is earlier than 470 B.C.

Even the short Book of Obadiah appears to have been written at two different periods ; and textual and historical considerations compel us to divide it in the middle of v. 15. The first portion belonging to the Persian Period and the latter to the Greek.

Additions were made to Jeremiah, viz., chapters 30, 33¹⁻¹³, 49, a portion of 46 and 50, and possibly 35 and 38 ; the existing Jeremiah writings were re-edited and many interpolations introduced.

The Book of Joel also may be regarded as falling within this period. It is difficult to fix its date precisely as it is so destitute of historical allusions ; but the language and ideas seem to point to the Persian Period. The book deals with a national pestilence and famine, which the author regards as judgments of God. It ends with a promise of a better time and a final judgment, in which Israel shall emerge purified and glorified.

Jonah has also been the cause of much debate both as to date and interpretation. The truth which seems to be emerging is that it belongs to the class of Hebrew literature known as Midrash, i.e., imaginative parabolic stories. Among other things it is remarkable for the reasonable readiness of the heathen to hear and repent. The fish is 'the all-absorbing empire of Babylon which swallowed up Israel, not however to destroy it, but to give it room for repentance' (Cheyne). Its date falls between 450-400 B.C., and its writing betrays the presence of some at least in the reformed nation who were wide in sympathy and broad in their

outlook on the Gentile world ; for Jonah is sent to the city of Nineveh sorely against his will, is punished for his reluctance, and at the end of his successful mission, which typifies the obligation of the Jews to spread the truth they possess to others, the word of the Lord comes to him saying, ' should not I have pity on Nineveh that great city, wherein are more than six score thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left ; and also much cattle ? '

Malachi
450-350 B.C.

With Malachi prophetic literature comes to an end. It deals with the old theme of the encroachment of foreign customs into the Church—and the old sins which had so often roused prophetic ire. But in one respect at least it closes worthily the great traditions, for it strikes a note of liberality in religion:—

' From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same my name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place incense is offered unto my name, and a pure offering, for my name is great among the Gentiles.' ¹

In other words acceptable worship was not limited either to Jews or Judaism. It is perhaps the only Old Testament parallel to the celebrated saying of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel—' the hour cometh when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem shall ye worship the Father the hour cometh and now is when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth.' ²

But it is typical of the broadening sympathies of one section of the Jews ; a process which in the next chapter we shall see continuing.

¹ Mal. 1¹¹.

² John 4²¹⁻²³.

The date of the book is uncertain, 400-350 seems most probable—but a fairly strong case can also be made for the period of Haggai and Zechariah (see p. 41).

Misfortune was apparently suffered by the Jews as the Persian empire tottered to its fall. Ochus Artaxerxes Ochus 358-338 B.C. and Isaiah 63-64 and 24-27 was both a bigot and a tyrant, and religious persecution was in vogue. Isaiah, chapters 63⁷-64¹² probably refer to these dark days. Chapters 24-27 are assigned by Cheyne and others to about the end of the Persian Period—when the star of Alexander the Great was rising, and the world was in turmoil.

Effects of Persian Period

Besides many other influences in thought and life Persian Period borrowed from the Persians during their time of vassalage, there are three distinct portions of later Jewish and Christian belief which may be traced to this period.

From the Persians were borrowed some at any rate of the personalities who figure in the angelology and demonology, which is a characteristic of the later phases of Jewish faith, and has passed from them into Christian theology. Angels and Demons The doctrine of the Resurrection Resurrection of the Body, which became a passionately held belief of the Pharisee party, was adopted during these years from the Zoroastrian religion and gradually spread through the nation. It should be borne in mind that until they came in contact with the Persians the Jews had no belief in the immortality of the Soul as we understand that phrase; their term for what we should term the spirits of the departed was *rephaim*, 'the pithless shades.' The place of their abode was

Sheol—a gloomy, hopeless and miserable region, where neither joy, nor sorrow, might enter, and where the bare shadow of a half dreaming consciousness survived. Such a verse as ‘Thou wilt not leave my soul in Sheol, neither wilt thou suffer thy holy one to see corruption’¹ could only have been written after the Jews had been under Persian influence.

The translation of the word in the Authorized Version as ‘grave’ or ‘Hell’ is utterly misleading. It has neither the one meaning nor the other.

Satan

During this period Satan also makes his first appearance in the Bible. Until the Jews came in contact with the Zoroastrian religion they apparently had no conception of any such personality. The tempter in the Eden story is the serpent (the story being borrowed from the legends of ancient Babylonia). It was only a much later theology which explained the reptile as being Satan in disguise.

The monotheism of the Jews could not tolerate the dualistic tendency of the Persian system, with its strife between Ormuzd (the power of light or goodness), and Ahriman (the power of darkness and evil, and the opponent of Ormuzd); the Hebrew Satan was accordingly made into the minister of Jahveh, and appears as one of the divine court both in Zechariah 3 and in the Book of Job—which, together with Psalm 109 and 1 Chron. 21¹, are the only passages in which he is mentioned in the Old Testament, all of them being later than the commencement of the Persian Period.

Hebrew

Language dies

It was in the time of unsettlement that attended the varied fortunes of the returned exiles, and the subse-

¹ Ps. 16¹⁰.

quent break-up of the Persian Empire by the Greek conquests, that the Hebrew tongue gradually dropped out of the Jewish daily life, until it became to them virtually a dead language. The process was almost an inevitable one; they were surrounded on all sides by a mixed population, planted in the country by various conquerors, none of them speaking Hebrew. With these people they were in daily contact; military and mercantile considerations alike forced them to speak the common Semitic dialect of their neighbours known as Aramaic, while the pure native language gradually dwindled down to the possession of the priests and scholars. Before long the process was so complete that the Jews were unable to understand their own scriptures, and when they were read aloud they had to be translated section by section into Aramaic by an interpreter—a metugeman as he was called. By the end of the Persian period and the commencement of the Greek period this process was practically complete, and the transition from one tongue to another accomplished.

Aramaic takes
its place

After what has already been said it is hardly necessary to emphasize the fact that, both from a doctrinal, literary, and national point of view the years during which the Israelites came under Persian influence are among the most momentous in Jewish history. During that time influences in thought and life were caught up and blended into the national character and belief, which are with us still, having passed from their Persian source through Jewish channels into the Christian movement, and the theological opinions of to-day.

CHAPTER VI

Greek Period. 332-167 B.C.

Alexander the
Great 332 B.C.

PERSIA followed in due course the fate of all great empires, and weakness and decay set their fateful seal upon it. The Egyptians and the Assyrians overran a portion of the crumbling empire, while Judah having become once more the battle-ground of the contending nations suffered severely at their hands. In 332 B.C. Alexander the Great, having crushed the Persians in a series of brilliant victories, became master of the destinies of Israel, who thus passed into a new era of their history. The Greek period lasted from 332-176 B.C. It carved its influence deep in Jewish character and belief; and its speculation and philosophy find echoes in the literature which was produced under its sway.

Literature

Ezra and
Nehemiah
c. 300 B.C.

Chronicles
c. 300 B.C.

Early in the time of the new conquest the historical writings of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Chronicles, and the love-idyl of Ruth were written. Ezra and Nehemiah gather together the fragmentary records of the events attending the return of the exiles, the rebuilding of the city, the successes and failures of the patriotic leaders, and the final triumph of the Law; while Chronicles is a revision of the older historical books

from the point of view of the Priestly writer. The same events are retold, but are given a distinct religious bias.¹

The Song of Songs, like the Books of Daniel and Revelation, has given abundant scope to the devout imagination; and those who love to discover allegorical meanings have expended volumes in the elucidation of the mysteries it is supposed to contain. St. Bernard wrote eighty-six sermons on the first two chapters alone. Fuller knowledge of modern-day Syrian customs, and of ancient usages, together with careful study of the structure of the book, compel the view that it is really a collection of songs used at marriage festivals round about Jerusalem; these have been loosely strung together by an editor. The language and usages implied are strikingly like the ancient customs that are still perpetuated in Syria in connection with native weddings. And the date of the present arrangement of the Song of Songs is apparently in the Greek period.

The most characteristic products of the age, showing as they do traces of the Persian and Greek influences, is the group of writings known as the Wisdom Literature, which comprises Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes.

Pre-eminent among these stands the Book of Job, 332-300 B.C.

¹ A few instances will illustrate this. They could be greatly multiplied. 1 Kings 15¹⁴, 22⁴³, Asa and Jehoshaphat sanctioned local shrines. 2 Chron. 14⁵, 17⁶ Asa and Jehoshaphat abolished them. 1 Kings 8³, and Deut. 31, 2 Sam. 15, etc., Ark borne by *priests*; 2 Chron. 5⁴, Ark borne by *Levites*; 2 Kings 11, *foreign* bodyguard; 2 Chron. 23, guard of *Levites*; 1 Kings 15²³, Asa diseased; 2 Chron. 16¹⁻¹², supplies religious reason; and so in case of disasters that overtake Jehoash, Amaziah, and Azariah, etc.

which voices with wonderful beauty the anxious questionings of men concerning the existence of suffering and evil in the world, and is indicative of the 'modernist' tendencies of a certain section of the Jews—the inevitable result of contact with Grecian and Persian influences. It is interesting to note in passing that Job, the man well pleasing to God, is *not* one of the chosen race—he is of the land of Uz (i.e., an Edomite) a member of the tribe with which Israel was constantly at enmity; and that Satan is not the adversary of God, but one of his messengers. Also Job has no hope of immortality—no thought of his suffering being recompensed hereafter.¹ To his view good and bad alike go to Sheol at death. His disasters are finally made good by return of earthly prosperity. Eliphaz typifies the belief in *special revelations*, a spirit has appeared to him, and a thing been secretly revealed in visions of the night.² Bildad symbolises *conservative traditions*—'inquire of the former age,' 'we are of yesterday and know nothing.'³ While Zophar is an egotistical dogmatist, who insists that Job must be suffering only what he deserves.⁴ The book has been edited and re-edited—insertions made and pieces taken out to suit later Jewish orthodox tastes, but it remains one of the most interesting, most powerful, and most heterodox books in the Bible. Its final date is probably early in the Greek period—but the *original story*, on which it is founded, is much older, and the book has grown gradually to its present form—probably taking a hundred or more years in the process.

¹ Job 7⁶⁻¹⁰, 14¹⁰⁻²², and compare Revised Version translation of Job 19²⁵⁻²⁶.

² Job 4¹²⁻¹⁶. ³ Job 8⁸⁻¹⁰. ⁴ Job 11¹⁻⁶.

Ecclesiastes is another unorthodox production of great beauty and power. The writer is sated and saddened by the monotony, hollowness, and brevity of life. His wisdom has but increased his grief, and the moral and conclusion of the book has been not inaptly summed up by one writer as 'do good and don't think.' Solomon is used merely as a figure-head, and type of wisdom and wealth. The book if language and thought afford any clue, is much later in date than the wise monarch. It is either late Persian (380-332 B.C.) or more probably, judging by language and historical allusions, late Greek, 250-200 B.C.

The Book of Proverbs belongs to the same group of writings ; it is a collection of wise sayings, some of them probably of very ancient date, and by various authors, blended with philosophical speculations as to the function of Wisdom as the creative agency employed by God to call the world into being. Here again the authorship of Solomon is a mere literary device, and the work of various revisers is evident. The date of compilation falls between 380-280.

The writings alluded to above, viz., Job, Ecclesiastes, Proverbs, constitute what is known as the Wisdom Literature of the Old Testament. The term *Wisdom Literature*, however, includes also some of the Apocryphal books, i.e., books which although at one time considered by a certain section of the Jews as inspired, were ultimately excluded from the Canon of Scripture for dogmatic or other reasons. The group includes Ecclesiasticus and the Wisdom of Solomon, which belong to the same period.

By the authors of these books the term Wisdom is used in a new sense. It is no longer merely an abstract

Ecclesiastes
380-200 B.C.

Proverbs
380-280 B.C.

Wisdom
Literature

The new
meaning of
Wisdom

quality like goodness, or cleverness, or valour, nor does it mean wisdom in the usual Old Testament sense of cleverness, or administrative ability, or the magician's esoteric knowledge. It has come to have a *moral* meaning—the fear of the Lord is the beginning—the first condition of it : but that is not all that is meant by any means. It is also the most precious possession of God himself, and *the directing principle of his activity*. Nor is this all ; by a third stage of development in thought it is regarded as the *divine agent in creation*. This new conception in Jewish philosophy is fully and beautifully set forth in the eighth chapter of Proverbs :—Wisdom is a power sent forth by God to do his work, ' a master workman ' formed by God ' in the beginning of his way, before his works of old ' to carry out his plans and purposes.¹

Its personification

A new conception

This was something entirely new in Hebrew thought ; the earlier prophets and teachers had emphasized Jahveh's Holiness, his Isolation, the necessity of approaching Him by correct procedure ; but here the divine power of Wisdom, the Creative Energy of God, waits at the cross-roads of life, nay, at men's very doors, to inspire, encourage, and enrich, those who have eyes to perceive it ; the gateway of approach is through no Temple's portal, but through the inward door of the heart, in other words through humility, purity, and knowledge.

Result of Persian and Greek speculation

This new phase of thought was the result of contact with Greek and Persian philosophic speculations. From this time forward this combination of Judaism with Gentile philosophy was developed by the sages, and it is not surprising that it found its most congenial

¹ Prov. 81.30.

soil in the Jewish colonies in foreign lands—the Dispersion—where it made an easy road for the reconciliation of various ideas which were in no wise traceable to either prophet or patriarch.

It was destined to have far-reaching effects on Christian doctrine, and we shall see it later on, after describing its circuit in foreign lands, returning to make its contribution to the New Testament literature in the Fourth Gospel.

Allusion has already been made to the Dispersion, Dispersion and as it represents a development of Jewish life due to political causes, a word of explanation must be given of the term. It was during the Persian and Greek ascendancies that partly under the pressure of economic conditions in the pursuit of mercantile enterprise, and fresh fields of commerce, and partly owing to forcible transportation by various conquerors, the Jews began to follow the great trade routes, and to form what was afterwards called the DISPERSION, i.e., colonies of Jews in Gentile cities. These in their turn visited Jerusalem from time to time, and the narrow national prejudices became in this way more and more broken down among a certain section of the people. For the Jew in a foreign land could not remain as narrow, or formal in his outlook, as his compatriot who had been born and reared in the protecting shadow of the Law.

The Greek Empire inevitably exercised an influence Greek Influences not merely in the direction of speculation on the problems of life and death, but it also through that very cause brought about a readjustment of parties in the Jewish State.

Under the rule of the new conquerors, foreign ideas Rise of the Sadducees

and customs flowed freely into the nation. The party among the Jews who were responsible for the government, as well as for the chief commercial enterprises, were perforce brought into close touch with the various foreign nations that surrounded them, and began to take a broader view of the world, and of peoples and ideas that were not exclusively Jewish.

Foreign customs, thoughts, and habits mingled with their Hebrew sympathies and usages, and modified them to a considerable extent. This cosmopolitan, broad-minded, free-thinking party, largely composed of the statesmen, soldiers, and merchants, eventually became what we know as the SADDUCEES.

Rise of the
Pharisees

There was, on the other hand, a reactionary strictly Priestly Party, wedded to the Law, who insisted the more loudly on Israel's separateness, on its ritual and its religion, the more the cosmopolitan Sadducees grew in power and importance; this Priestly Party became known as the PHARISEES. Thus the interval of outward peace gave the opportunity for inward discord. The two parties were each represented in the Priesthood itself, and the position of High Priest, now the highest post in the Jewish State, was keenly contested for by both sections, and was sometimes held by a representative of one party, sometimes by a member of the other.

Development
of Synagogue

The Synagogue comes into clearer prominence by this time, and existed in all Jewish communities. With the scattering of the race it had become an inevitable and necessary part of the national religion.

The only Old Testament reference to it occurs in Psalm 74⁸, which was written in the Maccabæan age,¹

¹ Or possibly late in the Persian Period.

and gives a vivid picture of the misery of a time when harsh oppression was rife. By that time the Synagogue was an accepted part of the national life. It was, however, something more than a religious institution—it had legal functions and could exercise discipline (just as in the early days the legal business was transacted at the local shrines). It had the power of inflicting punishment by *scourging* with thirty-nine lashes, or by *excommunication*, and it could even inflict the penalty of *death*. Its affairs were managed by a Council of twenty-three elders in the larger towns, and of seven in the smaller. The service opened with the reading of the commandments; then followed prayer, the reading of the law, the reading of the Prophets, the expounding and translation of the Scripture, and the benediction. It was not absolutely necessary for an official to conduct the service; any competent person might do so if he so desired.

Supreme over all these smaller meeting-places there arose the Sanhedrin or Council of seventy-one elders, which, mainly composed of the aristocratic section of the community, gradually came to be the supreme court in Jewish affairs, and even exercised jurisdiction over Israelites living in the Dispersion. It was to all intents and purposes the Jewish Church Council, Supreme Court, and Parliament, rolled into one, with the chief priest as President. The march of events gradually curtailed its powers. Although at one time under the Romans it was allowed the controlling voice in all local affairs (only the infliction of the penalty of death being taken from its hands), the continued riot and disorder of the state entailed the weakening of its governing authority. The Herods

and the Romans gradually depressed it, civil war undermined it, and finally it vanished with the extinction of the Jewish state itself.

Disruption of the Greek Empire, 301 B.C.

Battle of Ipsus
301 B.C. and
Alexandrian
Suzerainty
301-198 B.C.

The Greek Empire was weakened by a civil war, which divided it into the rival kingdoms of ALEXANDRIA and SYRIA. Israel became for a time the shuttlecock in the schemes of the contending parties, but after the Battle of Ipsus in 301 B.C., in which the Syrian army was overthrown, it became the property of Ptolemy the First, whose seat of government was Alexandria, and until the year 221 B.C. there was a time of peace for the harassed state.

Septuagint
c. 280 B.C.

About the year 280 Ptolemy II ordered a translation of the Jewish Scriptures to be made for the great library of Alexandria. This Greek version of the Old Testament grew into what we know as the Septuagint, a name which it received from the later legend which asserted that it was composed by seventy-two Jewish scholars, who each wrote a Greek translation at the same time, and were miraculously inspired to absolutely agree on the results.

The translation made for Ptolemy was really the first five books; other books were gradually translated and added, until the version as we know it was complete by the second century B.C. It is not our Old Testament exactly. The order of books is different, and the Apocryphal books which do not appear in our version were included.¹

¹ It included Maccabeus, Ecclesiastes, Tobit, Esdras, Judith, Baruch, Wisdom; and in the Septuagint the Book of Daniel included Bel and the Dragon, Susanna, and the Song of the Three Children.

It was this Greek version of the Old Testament which was generally used in the early Christian churches, and the early fathers quote the Apocryphal books as of the same authority as the rest of the Scriptures.

It is impossible to follow the history of the struggle between the rival Jewish factions, or to go into detail into the wars between the Alexandrian and Syrian portions of the dismembered empire of Greece. Eventually the tide turned against Alexandria, and the Jews passed under the control of Syria 198 B.C. They immediately felt the heavy hand of their new master. In returning from a campaign in Egypt, Antiochus, the Syrian king, wantonly plundered the Temple at Jerusalem, 170 B.C. It was but a foretaste of what was to follow.

Syria
198-143 B.C.

Syria and
Antiochus
Epiphanes

Antiochus was besieging Alexandria shortly after this, when a new factor came into the problem. Roman envoys appeared in his camp and peremptorily ordered him to raise the siege and retreat. He endeavoured to postpone his answer—but the Roman envoys drew a circle in the sand round Antiochus and informed him that his answer must be given before he left it. Unable to resist their dictation, but raging at the affront, he returned home in 168 B.C., resolving to consolidate his forces and to weld his kingdom more closely together with a view to withstanding Rome. His first step was to insist on uniformity of religion. Zeus, he decreed, should be the object of worship for all his subjects; and so to the outrage of plundering the Temple in 170 he added that of making the altar the place of sacrifice to Zeus in 168.

Rome
intervenes

'The abomination of desolation'¹ was this image of Olympian Zeus which was set up.

The Abomin-
ation of
Desolation

¹ Dan. 11³¹, 12¹¹; Mark 13¹⁴.

The Scriptures were burned, Jewish observances forbidden, and a fiery persecution commenced against those who rebelled ; many of them suffered martyrdom, many fled for refuge to Egypt, and many more sought shelter in the rocks and caves near Jerusalem.

Daniel
c. 168 B.C.

To this time of persecution the Book of Daniel belongs. It was written to cheer and comfort the sufferers under Antiochus, to impress on them the special providential care of Jehovah over Israel, and the inevitable final triumph of the oppressed people.

Daniel was not the author of the book—he seems to have been the hero of various popular legends and stories, and is said to have been taken captive by Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, in the year 605 B.C.

The dreams and the interpretations of them in the first six chapters are intended to demonstrate the supremacy of Israel's God even in the affairs of a Gentile ruler. The remaining chapters are devoted to the persecution of Antiochus, in which the abomination of desolation was set up ; and they end with a consoling interpretation of Jeremiah's ' seventy years ' before the Kingdom of the Messiah shall be established. The delay is explained by the declaration by Gabriel that the seventy years really mean *seventy ' weeks of years,'* (i.e. 490 years), and the book ends with the usual prophetic promise of the golden age of national prosperity.

Jeremiah
50, 51²⁻⁴⁹

Further additions were made about the same time to Jeremiah, viz., chapters 50-51, and portions of Isaiah chap. 33 chapter 2 and chapter 49. Chapter 33 of Isaiah is dated by Professor Cheyne as about the year 163 B.C.

CHAPTER VII

Maccabæan Period, 167-63 B.C.

THE policy of Antiochus Epiphanes stirred up the Jews to strenuous revolt. Matthias, an aged priest, slew a Jew who was offering heathen sacrifice at Modein, and he also murdered the Syrian officer who was present at the ceremony. Fleeing to the hills he and his family began the celebrated Maccabæan revolt. Under the able generalship of Judas Maccabæus (son of Matthias) the war went on with brilliant success.

Maccabæan
Revolt, 167

The two forces met in conflict at the Battle of Beth-Zur. 'O Saviour of Israel,' prayed the Jewish leader, as the battle was joined, 'shut up this army in the hand of thy people Israel, and let them be confounded in their power and horsemen cast them down with the sword of them that love thee, and let all that know thy name praise thee with thanksgiving.' The Syrian army broke before the fierce onslaught of the impassioned army, and was swept away in confusion, and Judas and his party entered Jerusalem in triumph. The victory and the cleansing of the Temple are celebrated in the 118th Psalm, which is resonant with a new confidence, and the outpouring of a national thanksgiving. 'O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good. . . . I shall not die but live

Battle of
Beth-Zur
165 B.C.

Psalm 118

66 Maccabæan Period, 167-63 B.C.

and declare the works of the Lord. . . . O Lord we beseech thee send now prosperity.'

It was the rebound of national hope after the wretchedness of the persecution, torture, and death that had been the lot of the pious Israelites under the tyranny of Antiochus.

Soon afterwards the Syrians conceded religious liberty to the Jews, whose star seemed to be rising once again among the nations.

Religious
Liberty
granted
161 B.C.

This concession was as much the result of political circumstances as of military needs, and with it the grievance that underlay the Maccabean Revolt came to an end.

Renewal of
Revolt and
Death of Judas
161 B.C.

Judas, however, and his party had tasted the sweets of power, and the condition of Syria, torn as it was by civil war, offered too good an opportunity for successful revolt for the keen soldiers and politicians of the Maccabæan party to let it slip. The general hatred of the brutal High Priest appointed by the Syrian king precipitated matters. The war was renewed, but the Jews met with disastrous defeat; and Judas himself was slain. The Maccabæan party fled to the wilderness of Tekoa, and for a time became little more than a formidable band of brigands, maintaining themselves by raid and plunder. Jonathan, the brother of Judas, however contrived to gain the confidence of Syria, and they returned to power. After pursuing a policy of peace, and to some extent restoring the prosperity of the country, he was treacherously murdered, and his brother Simon succeeded him.

Jonathan
161-142 B.C.

Simon
142-135 B.C.

Simon, continuing the policy of conciliation, obtained from Syria the acknowledgment of national

Maccabæan Period, 167-63 B.C. 67

independence. But the truce could not continue, Syria was hard pressed and wanted money; the demand for tribute was renewed; it was refused, and the Maccabæan war began again. The Syrians were defeated, but shortly after Simon shared the fate of his brother, and fell by the hand of an assassin—in this case his own son-in-law.

Renewal of
war
Maccabæan
Period

John Hyrcanus took up the uneasy position of leader, and under him a time of prosperity ensued.

John
Hyrcanus
135-105 B.C.

Syria was weakening. Rome on one side, and the Parthians on the other had decided on its ruin, and to make matters worse civil war broke out; Hyrcanus taking advantage of the political situation, soon succeeded by a policy of judicious intrigue, in regaining the national independence. He also regained possession of the whole of Palestine, so that by a combination of circumstances the little Jewish State found itself almost as important and powerful as in the palmy days of Solomon.

Solomon's
glory revived

But the Jews never seemed to have the genius of self-government. The golden years were wasted in an orgy of bloodshed and horror. These years of national independence are among the most wretched and bloodstained in Jewish history. The High Priesthood and the office of Head of the state was held by the Maccabæan or Sadducee party. They were by force of circumstances soldiers and politicians, and men of action rather than priests; the culture and refinement of Greece and Rome appealed to them, far more than did the narrowness of the Priestly or Pharisee section of the community, with its cast-iron Law. It was not long before the rival parties fell foul of one another.

68 Maccabæan Period, 167–63 B.C.

Civil war of
Pharisees and
Sadducees

The first outbreak resulted in the Pharisee party being driven out of all public positions. They gained in strength, however, and in 95 B.C. a terrible riot took place in the Temple at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles, between the two factions. Some 6,000 men were slaughtered in the Temple precincts, and the country became straightway involved in the horrors of religious persecution and civil war rolled into one.

Roman Con-
quest 63 B.C.

The hideous strife continued until at last the Roman legions descended on the blood-drenched country, and crushed both parties in the year 63 B.C.

Literature

Late
Psalms

A number of Psalms belong to this period of suffering and disorder, 'Thou hast cast us off,' 'How long wilt thou be angry with thy people,' 'We are counted as sheep for the slaughter,' 'the heathen have come into thine inheritance, thy holy temple have they defiled,' 'they have burned up all the synagogues in the land,' is the burden of them mingled with prayers for help, and an occasional flash of hatred against the enemy.

The Psalter may be regarded as being virtually complete by this time. Some of the later Psalms—notably 110, 118, 74, 79, and 83—are regarded by some critics as Maccabæan, others place them somewhat earlier; but with the exception of Psalms 94 and 137, which appear to belong to an earlier date (probably the Ezra-Nehemiah age), it may be said that the groups 90–106, 107–129, 135–145, 146–150 belong to a time subsequent to the conquest of Alexander the Great, and date variously from 300–150 B.C.

The book of Esther was also produced about this Esther time, and one of its main objects seems to have been to give an account of the origin of the Feast of Purim¹ in the form of a history which is hardly to be taken literally—the book was for many generations the subject of much dispute among the Jewish rabbis, some admitting it as part of the Scriptures—others refusing it admission.

To the same age of war and reprisal the 48th chapter of Jeremiah refers. Its spirit is of the most blood-thirsty and vengeful description, and it rejoices in the misfortunes of the hated Moabites. 'Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord negligently, and cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood,'² gives us the spirit of the whole chapter, which only finds its excuse in the seething passion of the time.

Jeremiah was re-edited, some interpolations and 134-104 B.C. corrections made, and it assumed much the form in which it has come down to us.

¹ Esther 9¹⁹.

² Jer. 48¹⁰.

CHAPTER VIII

Roman Period

Rome 63 B.C. **V**ARIOUS negotiations had taken place between the Jews and the Romans, but the Republic had never interfered actively in the affairs of Palestine ; the relations had been mainly diplomatic.

Now, however, Rome was adopting a new and aggressive policy in the East, and proceeded to add the wrecks of the Syrian possessions to her Empire.

This involved the absorption of Palestine, and in 63 B.C. Pompey, in the course of reorganizing the new province, advanced on Jerusalem.

Jerusalem
stormed 63

Aristobulus the Sadducee or Maccabæan leader surrendered, but his officers and men refused to do so, and retired to the enormously strong position of the Temple Mount. The Pharisees surrendered the city, but the remnant of the Maccabæan party resisted all the grim circumstances of a Roman siege for three months. There could however be but one end to their heroic defence. The Romans at length discovered the reluctance of the Jews to fight on the Sabbath, and taking advantage of this religious peculiarity carried the fortress by storm.

Judæa was placed under tribute, and a governor was appointed ; subject to him and to payment

of tribute-money self-government was allowed. The Maccabæan prince Hyrcanus was even made High Priest and Head of the State—but when a revolt broke out in 57 B.C. all civil power was taken from him, and he retained only his priestly position. Other revolts followed—always unsuccessful; and after the rising in the year 52 B.C., 30,000 Jews were sold into slavery in order to weaken and punish the irrepressible nation. Revolt 57 B.C.

In this turbulent time the Herod family rose from obscurity to be the chief force in the land. It was not a Jewish family originally, but by judicious marriage into the Maccabæan clan, and by careful intrigue with the Roman power, it rose to place and influence. Rise of the Herod Family

Rome itself was in the throes of turning the *Republic* into an *Empire*, and the quarrels of Cæsar, Pompey, and Crassus, and later of Antony and Octavian affected the fortunes of the Jewish state, and of Herod. He and his family were driven out of the country by the Pharisee faction—but having persuaded the Roman Senate to make him king he returned, laid siege to Jerusalem and captured it. Later on, having nearly been ruined by Cleopatra, who hated him, he deserted Antony, who had always been his friend, and espoused the cause of the victorious Octavian (or to use his more familiar title, Augustus). Antony's star was rapidly sinking and soon to be ingloriously extinguished, and so Herod had no further use for him. Jerusalem stormed by Herod 37

In recognition of his help Augustus confirmed his title of king; and so, secure in the favour of the first Herod King Emperor, he proceeded to rule Judæa with scant regard to Pharisaic ideas. He had no sympathy with narrow Jewish views; and foreign customs, foreign

His Hellenising influence

soldiers, and foreign commerce became the order of the day, while amphitheatres and gladiatorial shows, Roman monuments, and the encouragement of classical learning, subjected Judaism to one of its severest tests in its own country.

Herod even attempted to exploit the Messianic idea, and Hebrew prophecy found its fulfilment in Herod's wonderful Temple, whose blazing dome of gold crowned the summit of Mount Zion.

His private life

Conciliation and Romanisation were the two outward lines of his policy ; but they were accompanied by a subterranean policy of repression, torture, assassination, and espionage that made him the terror of his foes ; while his domestic life was one of the most pitiful and dreadful in history—brutal executions of relatives and even of his own children and wife, alternating with fits of conscience-stricken madness, in which he wandered, raving, through the palace.

Yet it should be recorded to his credit that many of his public acts were wise and broad-minded, and that he once stripped his palace in time of famine to give food to the starving.

'Massacre of Innocents'

Death of Herod 4 B.C.

Also it is only fair to say that black as is his record no trace is found in history of the Massacre of the Innocents, with which later Christian legend credits him ; and moreover he died four years before Jesus was born according to our chronology, although the Gospel places the birth in his reign.¹

¹ In order to explain this discrepancy and also the difficulty about the census, the story of which presents many difficulties, some critics, notably Professor W. M. Ramsay in 'Was Christ born in Bethlehem?' have been obliged to conclude that Jesus was born in the year 6 B.C.—but even this does not clear up the contradictions.

Position of Parties at the Birth of Christ

The condition of the nation at the time when Jesus was born was, as will be gathered from the foregoing, one of seething discontent, and one laden with explosive passions. The position and the parties may be briefly summed up as follows :—

The PHARISEE AND SCRIBE PARTY were enraged and alienated by the introduction of foreign customs and culture among the Holy people, to whom all these things were a defilement in their eyes ; they hated the Romans, detested the Sadducees, but were kept in subjection by the tight grip of the governing power. Pharisees

The SADDUCEE PARTY, though sympathising with Herod's efforts to liberalise and expand the nation, were alienated—a section of them at all events—by the deposition of the Maccabæan rulers and the enthronement of this upstart family. Sadducees

The HERODIAN PARTY consisted of the satellites of the Court and its agents ; clinging to office and power by any and every device fair or foul. Herodians

The ESSENE community partly under the Eastern influence (possibly Buddhist or Persian, combined with Pythagoreanism) partly in reaction against the turmoil of the times, had betaken themselves to a monastic life. There were some thousands of these men at this time, living in communities removed from the strife and bloodshed of the world. Candidates were only admitted to membership after three years' probation, and were sworn to strict secrecy as to the mysteries of the sect, and pledged themselves to lives of asceticism, celibacy, charity, and mysticism. Essenes

Besides this the Priests themselves—including in that term all the Temple ministrants—were so numer-

ous that they constituted a party in themselves. There were no fewer than 20,000 of them, at this time.

Rome Dominant over all stood the power of Rome, preventing by sheer force of strength the outbreak of these different forces, recruited as each might be by the host of disaffected—the mere mob, fickle and turbulent as mobs ever are. And working through all these cross currents there was the persistent hope (a hope which has survived even nineteen centuries of disappointment since that time) that the day foretold by the prophets was at hand when the Messiah would arise, and Israel be victorious again—dominant over a prostrate world.

Messianic Hope

Such was the tangled and passionate society into which Jesus was born ; and in order to understand the situation more fully it should be also borne in mind that education was very limited, and writing was not generally practised. Dense superstition was still rife among the great mass of the people ; and cure of disease by exorcism—that is casting out the evil spirits which were thought to cause it—was commonly practised and considered legitimate.

Ignorance

Superstition

Hebrew a dead language Hebrew had become practically a dead language by c. 200 B.C.—so much so that the Scriptures when read in Hebrew had to be translated by a ‘ Meturgeman ’—an official interpreter, and both Jesus and his disciples undoubtedly spoke and taught in Aramaic.

Aramaic

This is not the place in which to attempt a sketch of the life of the great founder of the Christian faith. Our concern is with the growth of the literature that has clustered round the record of his life and teaching, and we must pass swiftly on, over the events of his

short wonderful ministry, to the time when the early Church was emerging into life and activity.

Meanwhile bear in mind that Herod's dominions were divided at his death between his sons Antipas (whose rule extended over Galilee and Peraea) and Archilaus (who ruled Judæa and Samaria). Archilaus was deposed for misrule and Judæa became a Roman Province 6 A.D., with Quirinius as its Procurator. This degradation fanned the smouldering fires of revolt once more, and a new militant anti-Roman faction recruited mainly from the more turbulent among the Pharisees, sprang up, known as the Zealots.

Herod—
Galilee
Peraea
Archilaus—
Judæa
Samaria
Judæa a
Roman
Province 6 A.D.

Pilate was made Governor in 26 A.D. His name is chiefly known in history because of the tragedy which took place in his term of office. For the rest, he was not a very tactful officer, and his domineering spirit nearly provoked an outbreak more than once.

Pilate
26-35 A.D.

In or about the closing year of his term of office the conversion of the Apostle Paul took place. The little Christian community had in fact not aroused much attention among the turbulent passions of Jerusalem, save to arouse occasional persecution, such as we hear of in the martyrdom of Stephen; and having done to death the founder of the new heresy, the authorities no doubt considered it would collapse. With Paul, however, it takes on a new aspect, and under his tireless labours it was destined to travel far beyond its stormy birthplace. Born of a Pharisee family, he was also a child of the Dispersion, and at his native town of Tarsus he must have necessarily gained a more liberal outlook on the world than he could have done amid the narrow intrigues and factions of Jerusalem.

Paul's Conver-
sion c. 35 A.D.

Paul

38 A.D.

After three years spent in Arabia, he returned to Jerusalem in 38 A.D. and there, according to his own account in Gal. 1¹⁸ met Peter and James, after conferring with whom for fifteen days he started on a missionary journey to Cilicia and Syria.

Early Christi-
anity Jewish
in tone

Paul was not allowed to remain at his work in peace. The prevailing tone in Christianity was still Jewish, and the belief was deeply rooted that Jesus was the Messiah, and that he would come again in power, establish the truth of his followers' claim, and redress the shame of his tragic end, by establishing the glories of the glittering city of God.

Expectation
of the Second
Coming

In the early Church the whole position hinges on the expectation of the immediate Second Coming, and the establishment of a Messianic Kingdom ; the whole of the early Church believed in it implicitly ; the hope of it rings through Gospel and Epistle alike,¹ and it was not till the third century, when generation after generation had come and gone that the hope waxed dim, and at length was deferred to a shadowy and uncertain future age.

Jewish posi-
tion in regard
to Second
Coming

The Jews who joined the new movement, undoubtedly did so with the distinct faith and hope that in their day and generation they would see the triumphant end of Jewish bloodshed, Roman power, and general anarchy ; and that from the wreck of the world the chosen race would arise purified and supreme. The more liberal probably would allow that Gentiles might be admitted to a place in the new glories ; but it would be a subordinate place, in

¹ See for example 1 Cor. 4⁵, 11²⁶, 15⁵¹, 16²² ; 1 Thess. 4¹⁵⁻¹⁷, 5^{1.3} ; Matt. 10²³, 16²⁷ ; Mark 8³⁸, 9¹ ; Luke 9²⁶, in all of which the Advent is expected forthwith.

a dispensation that was first and foremost Jewish.

And meantime the general body of Israelites was expecting the advent of *their* Messiah, a mighty prince and conqueror, who should rival Solomon in splendour and wisdom, and David in valour; for remember the 'acceptable year of the Lord' of which Isaiah spoke was to be the 'day of vengeance of our God' as well;¹ and the nation had not outgrown the spirit of Ezekiel's ghastly anticipations in his 38th chapter.

Paul, however, stepping outside even the Dispersion, was receiving Gentile converts to full Christian privileges, hopes, and promises. What, the stricter Jews began to wonder, was the particular benefit of having been born of the chosen race and heir to the promises? Paul's attitude

The early Jewish Christian was not prepared for the blunt answer that there was none, and so endeavoured to stipulate that if Gentiles were converted they must become Jews first and then be admitted as Christians—or in other words, that Christian converts must conform to the Jewish Law. The question at issue was nothing short of this: should Christianity be a Jewish sect or not? Judaising attitude

Paul's answer was emphatically that it should be a broad movement not limited to Jews, or made hard for Gentiles.

The early Church met in consultation on the matter at Jerusalem, probably in 49 A.D.² and the result is described in Gal. 2. (It is also described in Acts 15, Council of Jerusalem 49 A.D.

¹ Isaiah 61².

² There is an uncertainty of three or four years in all the dates of Paul's life.

and the two accounts differ—that of Paul is probably the more accurate). From the account in Galatians it would appear that the Apostle to the Gentiles carried his point, and the door of Christianity was thus opened to the whole world. Having settled this preliminary difficulty Paul went on with his work in various Gentile cities, with varying fortunes, with a tenacity of purpose and an unselfish energy that without doubt largely account for the spread and success of later Christianity.

Paul at
Corinth

1 and 2
Thessalonians
51-53 A.D.

In 51-53 A.D. he appears to have been busy in Corinth and its neighbourhood, and to these years we may assign the writing of the two Epistles to the Thessalonian Church, which are therefore the oldest part of the New Testament literature.¹

They were written to cheer the Church which he had founded at Thessalonica, in a time of persecution,—it 'having received the word in much affliction' and the members of it having 'suffered the same things of their countrymen' as the Judæan churches had done at the hands of the orthodox Jews.²

Unsettlement
due to expect-
ation of
Second
Advent

There is an obvious note of self-defence running through the first chapters; evidently Paul had been attacked by his theological opponents. Also there is a rebuke to the church for slackness in the avocations of daily life,³ and from the allusion to the question as to the Second Coming⁴ it is not improbable that the cause of the unsettlement was the hourly expectation of that event.

The Second Epistle deals with the same topic with even greater emphasis.

¹ Galatians is regarded as slightly earlier by some authorities.

² 1 Thess. 1⁶ and 2¹⁴. ³ 1 Thess. 4¹¹⁻¹². ⁴ 1 Thess. 4¹³⁻¹⁸.

By this time Greek was rapidly becoming the language of general exchange, and even in the Roman Empire such was the influence of Greek culture and philosophy that through the greater part of the Empire it was the prevailing speech. Hence the Pauline Epistles were written in Greek.

Greek
supplants
Aramaic

The Epistles were addressed to those for whom Aramaic would be as little known as Hebrew; and by this time the classical language was rapidly supplanting Aramaic even among the Jews of Palestine; while of course those in the Dispersion would be practically all Greek speaking.

The centre of Paul's next missionary enterprise seems to have been Ephesus, his stay at which flourishing city dates probably from 53-57 A.D.¹

Paul at
Ephesus
53-57 A.D.

While there he wrote the Epistle to the Galatians; and from the warmth with which he writes the attacks of the Jewish Christian party had evidently become much stronger and had stirred up trouble in the new Church. He is particularly bitter about the moral cowardice, as he evidently considers it, of Peter (Cephas) at Antioch, in not supporting him against the narrower Jewish Christians,² and he reminds the little community that their mother city is 'the Jerusalem that is above and is free';³ that they were set free by Christ from the old yoke of legal bondage; and that the essence of their religion was to produce the fruits of the *spirit*. The epistle ends with a plea for brotherly love and toleration, a vindication of the justice of eternal law, and the assertion 'that neither circumcision nor uncircumcision

Galatians
c. 53 A.D.

¹ Or according to the other reckoning 50-54 A.D.

² Gal. 2.

³ Gal. 4²⁶.

availeth anything but a new creature ; and as many as walk by this rule peace be upon them and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.'

Epistles to
Corinthians
53-57 A.D.

From Ephesus the Epistles to the Corinthians were also sent. It was a church mainly of Gentile converts, and apparently dissension and division had already laid their fateful hands on the struggling community,¹ which had also not outgrown the heathen vices and practices of its unregenerate days ; disorder and greed had even invaded the commemoration of the Last Supper.²

The Apostle also dealt with a number of questions that had been referred to him for settlement—both doctrinal and practical.

In the Second Epistle matters seem to have improved somewhat, and Paul expresses his satisfaction with the report he has received, and deals with the collection for the poor Christians of Jerusalem, who were evidently in great distress owing to the distracted state of the city.

Romans
58 A.D.,
(or early 2nd
century, see
footnote
on p. 81)

To this time of activity belongs also the Epistle to the Romans, which is generally dated at about the year 58 A.D. It seems to fall naturally into three divisions—(a) the first eight chapters dealing with the extension of Judaism to the wider world of the Gentiles ; (b) chapters 9-11 discussing the reason for the rejection of the Jews and the success of Christianity, and full of the smitten and decrepit state of the chosen race—its branches had been broken off, and the new graft of Christianity flourished on the old stock ;³ (c) chapters 12-14 which strike out an entirely new line, and are occupied with *applied* Christianity, the

¹ 1 Cor. I, etc.

² 1 Cor. 11^{17, 34}.

³ Rom. 11¹⁷.

influence of conduct, the responsibility of life since 'none liveth to himself'—the obligation of the strong to help the weak. Chapter 16 is generally admitted to be a later addition; and chapter 15 is also considered as not genuine, even by some who regard Paul as the author of the whole epistle.¹

Four years had now elapsed since he quitted Ephesus, and in 58 A.D. he decided, like the great teacher in whose cause he spent his life, to set his face to go to Jerusalem—a journey fraught with fateful consequences to Paul as it had been to his Master.

Journey to
Jerusalem
58 A.D.

The condition of the Holy City had been getting steadily worse during these years. The Zealots had gained ground; riot and murder were constant, and amid the general misery the Christian community came in for its share of persecution.

Paul wished to be present at the Feast of Pentecost and to take some financial help from their fellow-Christians to the suffering brethren in the Jewish capital. In the excited condition of the populace, he became the centre of a riot in the Temple, on a false charge of having taken a Gentile into the sacred precincts—a crime of most dreadful enormity.

Rescued and arrested by the Roman guard, he was taken before Festus; but evidently expecting scant justice he claimed his right of appeal to Cæsar,

Paul sent to
Rome
c. 60 A.D.

¹ A strong attack on the Pauline authorship has been made by Professor Van Manen, of Leyden, who makes out a strong case for late in the first, or early in the second, century, and who lays particular stress on the fact that chapter 11 implies the Fall of Jerusalem (70 A.D.) as past, and that the references to persecution and Church organization imply a later date. (See art. 'Romans,' *Encycl. Bib.*).

as a Roman citizen, and was duly sent to Rome for trial.

Some account of his journey is given in Acts, and then his personality vanishes from sight in the vortex of the imperial city.

Thrice it emerges for a few moments from the darkness and uncertainty in the Epistles to the churches at Ephesus, Colossæ, and Philippi, and the letter to Philemon.

Ephesians
63 A.D. (see
footnote p. 77)

The Ephesian Epistle is full of affectionate practical advice to the community he knew so well, from 'the ambassador in chains,' as he calls himself, and there is a splendid ring of courage and hope in the concluding chapter.

Colossians
63 A.D.

Colossians is more doctrinal in tinge, and there are allusions to false teachers, whose influence the apostle dreads, who appear to have been some early phase of what was afterwards known as the Gnostics (see p. 117), for they seem to have been partly philosophers, partly ascetics, and partly to have attempted to set up some worship of angels or spirits.¹

Philemon
c. 63 A.D.

The letter to Philemon, with its plea for the runaway slave Onesimus, is likewise generally referred to this date of the Roman captivity.

Philippians
63 A.D.

The Epistle to the Philippian Church seems to find its natural place in these closing years of the apostle's life. Its cheery and courageous tone, together with the beauty of the ever memorable words in the concluding chapter, 'finally, my brethren, whatsoever things are honourable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if

¹ Col. 2¹⁸⁻²³, 2⁸, etc.

there be any virtue and if there be any praise, think on these things,' form, together with the Colossian and Ephesian Epistles, a fitting swan song of the Apostle Paul as he drifts down the dark tideway of uncertain history, out of our ken.¹

The swan song of Paul

After that the great voice is drowned in the Neronian persecution, and the magnetic personality vanishes. What was his final fate we shall probably never know, but later tradition asserted that he met a martyr's death; and though it rests on very slender proof, it was perhaps the almost inevitable end of so prominent a Christian, and one so closely identified with the spread of a religion that now tasted the full bitterness of an orgy of cruelty and brutality at the hands of Nero and his satellites.

Death of Paul c. 64

The charge trumped up against the Christians was that of setting fire to Rome—a charge apparently made to save Nero himself from the suspicion of having done it. 'A vast multitude were convicted, not so much on a charge of making the conflagration, as of hating the human race. And in their deaths they were made the subjects of sport; for they were covered with the hides of wild beasts and worried to death by dogs, or nailed to crosses, or set fire to, and when day declined were burned to serve as nocturnal lights. Nero offered his own gardens for

Neronian persecution

¹ The genuineness of the Epistle has been challenged by some critics on the ground of its egotism, its allusion to persecution and faction, and Church development. They consider its date to be about 125 A.D.

The genuineness of Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon have likewise been severely questioned and placed at about the same date; the case made out against them hardly seems of sufficient strength to justify their rejection, though very probably they have not reached us in their original purity.

their exhibition, and also exhibited a game of the circus, sometimes mingling in the crowd in the dress of a charioteer, sometimes standing in his chariot.¹

Persecution at
Jerusalem
62 A.D.

This reign of terror at Rome had been preceded by a great outbreak of persecution at Jerusalem in 62, in which James the brother of Jesus and many others perished, and a considerable number of the Christians fled from the city; among the latter was the Apostle John, who settled at Ephesus, where he died peacefully at a ripe old age.

Jewish
Revolt 66 A.D.

But Jerusalem was hastening to its fall. The spirit of rebellion and disorder culminated in the treacherous massacre of the Roman garrison, and the Imperial forces straightway advanced on the doomed city. Their victory was not to be an easy one. The Jews drove the Romans back with very heavy loss, and this triumph gave the last touch to the national excitement. But there could be but one end to a contest with the overwhelming forces of Rome, whatever the temporary success achieved might be.

66 A.D.

67 A.D.

Vespasian, with an army of 50,000, proceeded to reduce Galilee, stronghold by stronghold, with the methodical procedure of Fate itself. The death of Nero, however, made Vespasian Emperor, and gave the Jews two years' respite while he settled the new government. They employed the time in a ruthless civil war, one party holding the Temple and the other the city, and thousands perished in the insane conflict.

Civil war in
Jerusalem
70 A.D.

Destruction of
Jerusalem

Finally Titus, the son of Vespasian, laid siege to the city, which after five months of stubborn resistance was stormed in 70 A.D.

¹ Tacitus Annal, xv. 44.

Titus ordered its destruction as the most effectual way of preventing future trouble. Thousands of the inhabitants were sold into slavery, sent to the amphitheatres, or condemned to the mines, and the Jewish State was at an end.

The catastrophe was so frightful that it makes a landmark in literary as well as civil history, and affords a valuable clue to the dates of the New Testament literature. It changed the current of Jewish life, which henceforth became the life of the Dispersion, i.e. of the various Jewish communities under Gentile rule.

Literature

The only part of our present New Testament which existed in the year 70 was the Pauline epistles above referred to, viz. Thessalonians, Galatians, Corinthians, Colossians, Ephesians, and Philemon; and bear in mind these would only be known in the churches to which they were addressed, or in the neighbourhood of them, for copying was slow and expensive; and moreover these letters would not be of more than local interest for some years after they were penned.

The other Epistles generally attributed to Paul are now recognized by most students to belong to a later date, and their position will be indicated later on.

It is also now generally admitted that the Gospels are all later than the date of the destruction of the Jewish state. This will be discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER IX

The Gospels

Jewish oral
tradition

IN dealing with the question of the production of the Gospels we must bear in mind in the first place the Jewish practice of handing down traditions by word of mouth,—a practice very difficult for us to realize in these days of cheap and rapid printing. Enormous masses of parable, commentary, and teaching were stored in the national memory and handed down from generation to generation simply by word of mouth.

Ascribed to
Moses

Moreover, the oral Law was considered in many cases to be as authoritative and binding as the written Law itself. In the time of Jesus the oral teaching and commentary were devoutly ascribed to Moses himself, on the principle apparently that as he was the founder of the Law he was virtually responsible for all its subsequent developments. It is difficult for us to enter sympathetically into this attitude of mind—but it was there as a fact, and there was nothing either fraudulent or immoral in the intention. The extent of these commentaries and expositions of the Law may be gathered from the fact that they now, in their collected form, fill nearly 3,000

Their number

closely printed folio pages, in the Jewish Talmud.¹

This practice accounts for epistles being ascribed to Paul, and gospels to disciples who were dead long before they were written. The writers belonged to the tradition or school of Paul or Mark or Matthew ; Pseudonymous Authors
or the name of one or the other might be attached to certain narratives that made a foundation for the work, and whatever was added went under the same name. The real author had no desire for literary fame ; and there is at least some modesty in the self-abnegation of an author who is content to sink his identity in the greater name of the man whose school of thought he represented, and in whose teaching he believed. But the practice does not make the task of a generation that has different views of literary method and custom, any the easier.

In thinking then of the beginning of the historical part of the New Testament, we have to divest our minds entirely of modern ideas and conditions, and to travel back over the centuries to a time when printing, shorthand, note-taking, were unknown things. It would have been contrary to all known methods to write out reports of speeches or incidents. No written reports at first

These would be verbally passed on from one to

¹ All this traditional Law was at last put into writing about 200 A.D., and was called the Mishna (i.e. 'repetition'). Then a new body of oral comment was added during the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries called the Gemara (i.e. 'doctrine'—or 'decision'), and finally the two were published together in what is known as the *Talmud*. The Mishna was really the collected and arranged decision of many sages in many generations on legal and ceremonial points. The Gemara was the result of further scholarly ingenuity and debate on these various points—elaborating, justifying, illustrating, and explaining them.

another—and up and down the distracted country there would be different individuals, one remembering one incident, another another. These different stories would tend to gather into groups, or to be collected by different individuals, just as a modern admirer of a great character gathers sayings and incidents of his hero's life and is full of reminiscences of him.

Paul does not
quote the
Gospels

Note that the Apostle Paul gives no quotation from the Gospels. There is not a single saying of Jesus made use of by the Apostle in the form you find it in the gospel stories; although he evidently knew some of the incidents, and the essence of the teaching, and wrought these up into his own particular view of the life and work of Christ.

Some reliable
history
becomes
necessary

Then there came a time when some of the stories circulated became so absurd and improbable that they threatened to corrupt the tradition, and to bring discredit on the movement; and moreover the scattered churches began to require some settled document which would give them a concise and accurate account of the life and teaching of Jesus, and to which appeal could be made.

Mark
70-90 A.D.

Accordingly a process of collecting and sifting all the different stories was begun; and it seems probable that there was first of all a rough collection made of the sayings of Jesus, which ultimately became the foundation of our Gospel of Mark, which is now generally admitted to be the earliest of the gospels.

Papias on
Mark's Gospel

The earliest mention of any process of the kind is, however, not until the year 150 A.D., when Papias¹

¹ Quoted by Eusebius, H.E. 3³⁹; the other early Christian writers do not agree about it; Irenæus, c. 177, says Mark wrote it *after Peter's death*; Clement of Alexandria later still

says that the tradition about Mark was (to summarise his statement) that he was—

- (a) The interpreter of *Peter*.
- (b) That he wrote what he *remembered*—of what he *heard* from *Peter*.
- (c) That he did not write the events, etc., *in order* (i.e. in chronological sequence).
- (d) That he was not a follower or hearer of Jesus.
- (e) That he was careful not to omit anything or to say anything false.

This earliest tradition, late though it is, probably gives us the clue to the situation.

Our Gospel is not the one referred to, for it is orderly and chronologically arranged as far as possible. Papias says Peter's discourses were spoken 'to suit what was required, without giving a corrected digest of the discourses of our Lord'—so that if there *was* an original narrative of Mark's, it was Mark's *recollections*, of what Peter had *remembered*, concerning what Jesus had *taught*. And this account—these notes and jottings of Mark, were in turn used by someone else in the production of our earliest gospel.

An indirect record

Its date is now fairly well agreed upon as between 70 and 90 A.D. ; so that there is an interval of at least forty years between the life of Jesus and the first written account of it which we possess. The following characteristics of Mark's Gospel should be noted.

(1). It is the shortest of the gospels and the narratives of events are simpler and briefer than in the later gospels—e.g. the temptation has no details,

Characteristics

(c. 200) that he wrote it *during Peter's lifetime*, who 'neither encouraged nor discouraged it.' While Origen later still (c. 230) tells us that *Peter dictated it*.

merely the statement that Jesus was tempted. (See further reference to this on page 96.)

(2). It is wide in its sympathies with the Gentiles and was evidently intended for a larger public than the Jews. This is apparent from the references to and explanations of Jewish customs—explanations which would have been quite unnecessary except to Gentiles¹, to whom these things might be unfamiliar.

(3). Mark has no account of the miraculous birth.

(4). There is only one Old Testament quotation ;² and that is inaccurate, for the passage does not occur in Isaiah.

(5). The original gospel ended abruptly at 16⁸ (this is now universally admitted), and 16⁹⁻²⁰ is a later addition by another hand, intended either to complete an unfinished work, or to supply a missing page of the ancient manuscript.

The gospel was evidently written by some one who had realized clearly both from the break up of the Jewish State, and the hostile attitude of his countrymen, that they would have little to do with the teacher of peace and goodwill and non-resistance, whom they had done to death some forty or fifty years before the time in which he wrote.

Side by side with this first written record there continued the oral tradition ; and the result of that on the story of Christ's life will be seen later on.

Revelation
81-96 A.D.

Towards the end of the century, perhaps slightly later than Mark, the mysterious book known as Revelation was produced. It belongs to the same class of literature as Daniel, and was intended to cheer

¹ Mark 7³, 7³⁴, 3¹⁷, 5⁴¹, 15⁴² and 34, ; while in other cases foreign terms and expressions are used and explained, 5⁹, 12⁴², 15¹⁶, etc.

² Mark 1².

and support the Church in time of persecution. Both in language and thought, and in its doctrine of the end of the world, it is entirely different to the Fourth Gospel, and there are comparatively few scholars now who would claim John as its author. It occupies a position by itself in New Testament literature, and the early Church was very uncertain about admitting it into the New Testament as an inspired book.

The worship of the Beast alluded to so often in it is Cæsar worship.

All loyal Romans were expected to burn incense before the bust of the reigning Emperor ; it was an attempt to make the Imperial Idea a binding link for the many different tribes and nations in the great Empire, and the refusal of the Christians to render this homage was a continual source of trouble, and occasion of persecution.

The allusions point to the fact that the book was written in a time of persecution—probably that under Domitian. One of its most interesting features is its undoubted Persian and Babylonian tinge. Chapter 12 is a clear borrowing from Babylonian Sun mythology ; and the whole imagery of the last days (which were expected by the author *immediately*) with the lake of fire and the hurling of the Prince of Evil therein, are most clearly tinged with Zoroastrian thought and language.

Domitian
81-96 A.D.

The figure of the monstrous Nero bulks large in the author's imagination ; the number of the beast is a cryptogram for his name (each letter stands for a number) and repeated allusion is made to him in chapter 13 ; while in chapter 17, in which the end is to be ushered in by the appearance of Antichrist,

Second
Advent of
Nero

Nero is expected to return from the abyss before his final perdition, and to prelude the triumph of good with a last red blaze of iniquity and outrage.

There are few better illustrations of the superstition of the age than the persistence of this belief in the second coming of Nero. Although he was dead and buried with full funeral honours, the report spread that he either was not really dead, or if so would be raised again, and organize the overthrow of the Roman Empire. That such a belief should exist and persist is strange; but it is stranger still to find that between the years 69-88 A.D. several impostors among the Parthians raised very serious rebellions by claiming to be the resurrected Emperor.

Origin of idea
of Antichrist

Jewish, Persian, and other oriental speculations had been busy for generations with fanciful visions of the end of the world. The general outbreak of disorder in the Roman Empire not unnaturally suggested the expected end of all things, and the dawn of the New Kingdom; and the speculations of the early Christian community easily concentrated on the figures of Nero and Jesus as typifying the powers of light and darkness.

Conference of
Jamnia
c. 90 A.D.

About the year 90 A.D. a conference between the rival schools of Jewish teachers was held at Jamnia to come to a final conclusion as to what books should constitute the accepted Scriptures. The two books still in dispute were Ecclesiastes and the Song of Songs. After much discussion, these were included by a majority vote, and from that time our Old Testament may be considered as settled. But the version of the Old Testament which was in use in the early Christian Church was the Septuagint, which included some of

Old Testa-
ment Canon
settled

the Apocryphal Books which are excluded from our modern Bible which follows the decision of the later Jewish scholars.

While these questions were agitating the Jewish rabbis further additions were being made to the Christian literature.

Matthew and Luke 90—120 A.D.

Between the years 90-120 the Gospels of Matthew and Luke were composed. Controversy as to their precise date and relation to one another are still rife, and it would only create confusion to indicate the various arguments here.

There are, however, certain well-defined characteristics which are emerging out of the chaos of criticism.

If Mark was Gentile in sympathy, there is equally no doubt that Matthew is Jewish Christian in tone. Matthew
c. 100 A.D. There is a persistent emphasis on the Old Testament proofs of Christ's Messiahship, and there are a number of anti-Gentile passages that are completely at variance with the teaching of Jesus as recorded in Mark.

The first allusion to a belief that Matthew had left any written record behind him is that of Papias, First allusion
to Matthew's
authorship
115-130 A.D. who, writing about 115-130 A.D., mentions the belief then prevalent, that Matthew had collected '*the Lord's oracles*' (logia), and who says that this work had received *many interpretations*.

The probable history of the Gospel appears to be that there was (1) an original Aramaic document, quite possibly written by Matthew, of a distinctly Jewish Christian tone, and dating just before the destruction of Jerusalem ; (2) this was taken and used by a later Original
Aramaic
Matthew
c. 70. A.D.

writer, when the break-up of Judaism was certain and the Church had to realize that it had a wider mission to fulfil than merely that to the house of Israel.

[It is important to bear in mind that the *Jewish* Christian and the *Gentile* Christian views were continually at variance in the Church's early life.]

Only in this way can one account for the strange combination of liberality with narrowness of tone in the Gospel. On the one hand, for example, there are the following passages, attributed to Jesus, setting forth the narrowest of narrow Jewish views:

Anti-Gentile
passages

1. 'Cast not your pearls before swine,' and 'give not that which is holy unto the dogs.' Compare with Matt. 15²¹⁻²⁸, where the Canaanitish woman imploring help for her daughter is told:

2. 'It is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to the dogs' (i.e. the Gentiles); while when the disciples ask that she shall be sent away they are told:

3. 'I was not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.'

4. 'Ye shall not have gone through the cities of *Israel*,' etc., 10²³. (No mention of any Gentile mission.)

5. 'Go not to any city of the Gentiles,' is the Master's instruction in 10⁵.

6. To sit on Twelve Thrones judging the Twelve Tribes of Israel, is the reward promised to the faithful disciples, 19²⁸.

Then the smoothing hand of the second author has come and accordingly you have the commands:—

Pro-Gentile
passages

To teach all nations, 28¹⁹.

Gospel to be preached to all the world,
24¹⁴ and 21⁴³.

Incidents in Matthew not narrated in other Gospels

(1) 'The Gospel contains,' says Davidson, 'unhistorical and mythical elements the most palpable of which is Matt. 27⁵²'—the resurrection of 'many saints' and their appearance to many. It is the most stupendous of all the New Testament miracles—yet it is never mentioned, or alluded to by any other person.

Incidents peculiar to Matthew

Other incidents found nowhere else in the New Testament are:—

(2) The guard placed over the tomb.¹

(3) Flight into Egypt.²

(4) Massacre of Innocents.³

(5) Birth of Jesus in Herod's reign.⁴

(6) Matthew and Mark agree, but contradict the other Gospels on the last words of Jesus. Matthew and Mark: 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' Luke: 'Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.' John: 'It is finished.'

(7) Matthew has a genealogy of Jesus *traced through Joseph*, not Mary—it is different from the one given in Luke.

(8) Matthew has a formula of baptism, in the name of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, which is given nowhere else, and which contradicts all the rest of the New Testament⁵ on that point.

Another of his strongly marked characteristics is that he has also got a particular dislike of the Scribe and Pharisee party.

The Gospel marks a distinct stage in the growth

¹ Matt. 27⁶²⁻⁶⁶. ² Matt. 2¹³⁻¹⁴. ³ Matt. 2¹⁶. ⁴ Matt. 2¹.

⁵ Matt. 28¹⁹. The early Christian formulæ was in the name of Jesus, Rom. 6; Gal. 3²⁷; Acts 2³⁸, 8¹⁶, 10⁴⁸, 19⁵; 1 Cor. 6¹¹, 1¹³, etc.

of the tradition. The author has evidently taken Mark as a basis, and collected much fresh material which he has worked into the narrative; and as he does not always agree with Mark's view, he not only amplifies his account, but sometimes revises his conclusions.

The following examples show this process with considerable plainness:—

In Mark 1³²⁻³⁴ *some* were healed; but in Matt. 8¹⁶ *all* were healed.

In Mark 3¹⁰ *many* were healed; but in Matt. 12¹⁵ *all* were healed.

In Mark 7³² *one* blind and dumb man cured; but in Matt. 15³⁰ *multitudes*.

In Mark 5² *one* maniac restored; but in Matt. 8²⁸ *two* maniacs.

In Mark 10⁴⁶ *one* blind; but in Matt. 20³⁰ *two* blind.

In Mark 5²³ Jairus' daughter '*dying*'; but in Matt. 9¹⁸ she is '*dead*.'

In Mark 11²⁰ fig tree withered *next day*; but in Matt. 21¹⁹ withered *at once*.

In Mark 6⁵ Jesus in his own country '*Could do no mighty work*,' save cure of few sick; but in Matt. 13⁵⁸ he did not *many* mighty works.

In Mark 16⁵ at the tomb a *young man* in white raiment; but in Matt. 28² an *earthquake* and an *angel*.

In Mark 1¹²⁻¹³ the temptation is dismissed in two verses, and reads as though it were a spiritual experience—as it no doubt was; but in Matthew 4¹⁻¹¹ it occupies eleven verses and becomes a detailed account of a series of conversations and incidents between Jesus and Satan, of which the earlier writer knows nothing.

These illustrations do not profess to be in any way complete. They could be considerably multiplied, but they will be sufficient to indicate the distinctive features of Matthew.

The Gospel was probably much in its present state by 90 A.D., and was finally completed by 120.

Luke c. 105 A.D.

The Third Gospel appears to have taken form after that of Matthew was much in its present shape, for in many instances it narrates Matthew's incidents ; but Mark's Gentile sympathy, and broad outlook, seem to have appealed to the author, and where Matthew and Mark are in conflict he generally agrees with Mark.

Like him he appears to have written with the Gentiles very clearly in view, and to have full sympathy with the Pauline view of the situation. The rejection of Christianity by the Jews, and its acceptance by the Gentiles is clearly recognized, and one of his striking characteristics is his generous feeling for the hated Samaritans. Mark ignores them. Matthew mentions them only once to quote Jesus as having said 'Go not to any city of the Samaritans'; but in Luke the sons of Zebedee are rebuked for wishing to invoke fire on them.¹ The best character in the celebrated parable of the Good Samaritan is one of the detested race,² while the one grateful leper out of the ten is also one of them.³

The author evidently did not believe, like most of

¹ Luke 9^{52.56}. ² Luke 10. ³ Luke 17¹⁶.

the Church, that the Second Advent was at hand. Care is taken again and again to warn them against any *immediate* hope of it.¹

Moreover, note that from the 'many' writers who had undertaken to give accounts, Luke undertakes to *sift out* the true versions, and give the history 'accurately' and 'in order.'²

Disagreements between Matthew and Luke

The following disagreements with Matthew should be noted :—

(a) Luke's genealogy of Jesus (which also traces descent through Joseph) 3²³⁻³⁸, is quite different from Matthew's (Matt. 1¹⁻¹⁶).

(b) In Luke the parents *reside* at *Nazareth*—but Jesus born at *Bethlehem* owing to census (Luke 1²⁶, 2³⁹, 24⁻⁴⁷); in Matthew they *reside* at *Bethlehem*—and *move* to *Nazareth* after the flight to Egypt in order to fulfil prophecy. (Matt. 2¹ and 2²³).

(c) In Luke the birth is heralded by angels and shepherds (Luke 2⁸⁻¹⁸); in Matthew by Magi and star (Matt. 2¹⁻¹⁰).

(d) The 'young man' of Mark (16⁵) who became 'an angel' in Matthew (28²) becomes '*two* men in dazzling apparel,' who are subsequently said to be angels in Luke (24⁴ and 2³).

(e) 'Blessed are the poor *in spirit*' says Matthew (5³). 'Blessed are the *poor*' says Luke (6²⁰). The correction is typical of his special sympathy with the poor.

¹ Luke 21⁹, 17²⁰, 19¹¹, 21²⁵; cp. Matt. 24²⁹.

² Luke 1¹⁻⁴.

The following passages and incidents appear in Luke only :—

Parable of Good Samaritan.¹

Conversation with penitent thief.²

Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.³

The walk to Emmaus.⁴

The last cry : Into thy hands.⁵

The song of Simeon over Jesus, with its promise of *Gentile* mission.⁶

The miraculous draught of fishes.⁷

Raising the son of widow of Nain.⁸

Healing of woman bound by Satan.⁹

The appearance of the angel strengthening Jesus.¹⁰

Healing of high-priest's servant's ear.¹¹

The following details as to the Last Supper¹² are given by Luke for the first time in disagreement with Mark and Matthew (*a*) the meal is ' the passover,' (*b*) the cup received before the meal and ' distributed,' (*c*) the phrase ' Do this in remembrance of me,' (*d*) the reference to the cup as the ' new covenant.'

As in the case of Matthew, these are merely some examples, not complete lists.

The date of the Gospel may be fixed as between the years 100 and 110 A.D.

Such then appears to be the relation of the three synoptic Gospels—grouped together under that name, because their attitude towards Christianity appears to be substantially the same. They show

¹ Luke 10. ² Luke 23^{39,43}. ³ Luke 23³⁴.

⁴ Luke 24¹³. ⁵ Luke 23⁴⁶.

⁶ Luke 2³². ⁷ Luke 5⁶. ⁸ Luke 7^{11,15}. ⁹ Luke 13¹⁶.

¹⁰ Luke 22⁴³. ¹¹ Luke 22⁶¹. ¹² Luke 22^{14,23}.

distinct leanings and sympathies, and there is a clear growth of detail as the years pass by, due no doubt to the grafting of oral tradition on to the written account; but each of them attempts to give according to his light a simple and straightforward *historical record*, gathering out of all the varying traditions what seemed to him to be most probable and nearest to the truth. It was no easy task from amid the mass of conflicting stories and legends to sift out the truth about occurrences which had taken place from forty to seventy years before, in a State that was convulsed with civil war and in the throes of final dissolution, and an age when there were few facilities for, and many obstacles to, the accurate chronicling of events.

The 'we'
sections

The same author appears, judging by style and language, to have written the Book of Acts, but that he was the travelling companion of Paul is improbable, in spite of the use of the pronoun 'we,' which has been until recently considered as conclusive proof of the matter.

The 'we' sections are distinctly marked off from the rest of the book both by style and by the accuracy of detail in the narratives; this seems to point to the fact of their having been written by Paul's companion. The sections are given below.¹

When we once pass from these verses the detail becomes meagre, and moreover some of the statements are flatly at variance with other statements found in the Epistles.²

¹ 16¹⁰⁻¹⁷, 20⁵⁻¹⁵, 21¹⁻¹⁸, 27-28¹⁶.

² Compare Gal. 4¹⁷, 5^{7, 10, 12}; 2 Cor. 10¹⁴-11¹³⁻¹⁵, with Acts 15, where the difficulty is smoothed over and nothing said

The author apparently had some fragmentary notes of the doings of Paul and used these and other accounts which he gathered together and which he combined into the story we have in Acts. The date is between 105-120 A.D.

The first apparent allusion to it is about 130 in the Epistle of Barnabas, the writer of which seems to know the speech of Stephen as recorded in Acts. First apparent
allusion to
Acts
c. 130 A.D.

of the circumcision of Titus. Compare also the three accounts in Acts, of Paul's conversion :—22⁹, the companions *do* see the light, and *do not* hear the voice, 9⁷ the companions *do not* see anything, but *do* hear the voice. They *do not fall down* : and Paul receives the explanation of the incident afterwards by Ananias. 26^{12.18} *only Paul* sees or hears anything, he and his companions *all* fall prostrate, and the explanation is given then and there. Again, Gal. 1^{17.21} mentions a missionary journey to Arabia and Cilicia—which Acts ignores.

CHAPTER X

The Philosophic Age

IT has been noted that in the latest of the three Gospels (Luke), there are warnings that the end of the world will not be immediate.

Luke slightly tones down Matthew's statement¹ that *that generation should see* the Second Advent—'The Son of Man coming in his kingdom.' The Second Advent will come (Luke 9²⁶) no doubt, but that generation will '*see the kingdom of God*' (9²⁷). What he means by this is made clear by the words of Jesus in Luke 17²⁰⁻²¹, when asked as to the coming of the kingdom, 'The kingdom of God cometh not with observation, neither shall they say Lo here! or there! for lo, *the kingdom of God is within you.*' Elsewhere he is more emphatic, '*The end is not immediately*' (21⁹); and he gives the parable of the talents according to Luke to show those who 'expected the kingdom of God was immediately to appear' that they were wrong (19¹¹). 'The times of the Gentiles must be fulfilled,' i.e. the mighty Roman Empire must run its great cycle before these things come to pass (21²⁴).

In point of fact, the expectation of the Second Advent was waxing dim. Paul himself who had

¹ Matt. 16²⁸.

proclaimed it so ardently was dead ; a longer history was uncoiling itself. While this was taking place in Christianity, Gentile influences were liberalising and broadening out the views of one section of the Jews, while accentuating the narrow nationalism of others—the subservience to foreign rule bringing out all the fierce obstinacy of their nature.

The outward fortunes of Judaism had not brightened. After nearly fifty years of truce the old rebellious spirit flamed out again, and while the Romans were engaged in the Parthian war there was an unexpected and awful outbreak of Jewish fanaticism, against their fellow-subjects who were not of their race. Massacres of the most ruthless description were perpetrated, and the lust of blood spread from town to town till over half a million men, women, and children, it is said, had been butchered.

Massacres by
the Jews

116 A.D.

Rome reasserted her power, and having made severe reprisals the scenes of horror ceased.

But within sixteen years there was a tremendous and final outbreak of Messianic excitement. The enthusiastic Rabbi Akiba proclaimed an adventurer Bar-Kokeba as the promised prince and leader, and a large following gathered round him.

Revolt of
Bar-Kokeba

132-4 A.D.

The war had the usual temporary success, and then there followed the usual inevitable retribution. The Emperor evidently resolved there should be an end once and for all of the Jewish trouble. When Severus, who was recalled from England to take charge of the operations, had completed his task little but a desert remained. It was one of the most bloody and pitiless campaigns in Roman history, and with it all semblance of Jewish national power vanished :

their homes were ashes, and their power utterly broken. Henceforth the persistent Messianic hope became a pious expectation, doggedly cherished even to this day, among communities too scattered and too weak to combine in any formidable numbers for militant purposes. Judaism, all its hopes of outward expansion shattered, concentrated all its fervour upon its Law and its traditions, and to such purpose did it put into practice the lesson it had first learned in the Exile, that it has accomplished the almost incredible task of remaining a nation, and maintaining its separateness, for eighteen hundred years, though scattered over the whole face of the earth, with no country to call its own, with no place on which its hope and interest might centre save the fallen city, in the ultimate return to which the pious Israelite still believes, and for which he still prays with a faith undimmed by the passing of the centuries.

Early Christianity and Rome

During these first thirty-five years of the second century the Christians also had assumed new relations to Rome. They had steadily increased in numbers, and the fact of their meeting in private, combined with the refusal to acknowledge the gods of Rome, or to pay homage to the imperial symbol, brought them into not unnatural suspicion.

Christianity
declared
illegal | 112 A.D.

In the reign of Trajan for the first time their legal position was defined: if accused of Christianity, they were to be released, if they would offer devotion to the gods. If they were intractable the penalty of death was to be carried out. Such were the instructions issued in the letter to Pliny, who was finding

the increase of the new sect embarrassing. This opened up the way to periodical outbreaks of persecution, but these were not continuous; the lot of the Christians depended a great deal on the ruling emperor, and on the temper of the populace; but the law might be put into operation at any moment, and a great many suffered cruelly for their opinions, in the reign of Trajan.

To the time of his decision, or thereabouts, the First Epistle of Peter is now generally assigned, though Dean Ramsay puts it as early as 80 A.D. The persecution alluded to, and particularly the reference in chaps. 3 and 4 to the trials of Christians, seem to fit the later time of Trajan rather than the earlier date. The questioning to which they were to be ready to return answer as to the hope that was in them,¹ and the evident allusion to legal proceedings in 4¹⁵⁻¹⁶, seem to belong to the time of the first Emperor who made Christianity illegal, and subject both to process and punishment at the hands of the government. In any case even the earlier date does away entirely with the authorship of Peter, who died about 64 A.D.

The Epistle to the Hebrews has always lain under suspicion of not being the work of Paul. It was ascribed to Barnabas by Irenæus towards the end of the second century. Origen about seventy years later also considered the author not to be Paul, and the Pauline authorship is practically unanimously given up now.

The author, however, was a man of wide learning and outlook, and he marks a stage of theological development beyond that of Paul. The controversy

¹ Peter c. 112 A.D.

Hebrews c. 112 or c. 80-90 A.D.

Marks a stage of development

¹ 3¹⁵⁻¹⁶.

between Jewish and Gentile Christianity had largely died down. The believers were glad to link themselves on to the old traditions by adopting a spiritual or allegorical interpretation of the ancient law or usage ; and so in Hebrews we find the events of early Jewish history, and the usages of the Law, all pressed into proof of the divine mission of Christ. The priesthood, the tabernacle, the covenant, the blood of the sacrifice, and incidents in the life of the early patriarchs—all these have in his view some figurative significance, 'the priesthood being changed there is made also of necessity a change of the law';¹ and so Jesus is made the new 'High Priest after the order of Melchizedek,' and the writer attempts to show that Christianity becomes in all points a higher, spiritualized development of Judaism, and that the crucifixion replaces the sacrificial victim.

A foregleam
of Philo

The theological bent of Paul moved in the same direction but did not work out the details with the devoted thoroughness and philosophic zest of this writer. He forms the link that in developing Christianity connects Paulinism with the conception of the life and work of Jesus that we get in the Fourth Gospel.

The writer of Hebrews gives us the first definite trace in the New Testament of the philosophic tendencies of Alexandria, whose chief mouthpiece was Philo, and whose influence on Christianity was to be so lasting and far-reaching.

James c. 112
A.D.

The events which form the background of the First Epistle of Peter, appear to have called forth the Epistle of James, which also deals with a time of dire persecution and distress. The writer seems to have

¹ Heb. 7¹².

taken violent exception to what he thought was the Pauline position as to the relation of Faith to Works. He values *works*, and emphasizes the practical rather than the theological side of religion.

The Epistle is an unmistakable refutation of the position taken up in this matter by the author or authors of Galatians, Romans, and Hebrews.

He takes the instances of Abraham and Rahab which are used with such elaboration¹ by them to prove that the belief or faith in God was the thing that 'was reckoned for righteousness,' and retorts by deliberately contradicting the statement—'was not Abraham our father justified by *works* . . . and *by works* was faith made perfect'; and so of Rahab² also.

It is an unmistakable polemic against the other school of thought, whose attitude on the matter was probably being abused by nominal Christians, who made the possession of faith an excuse for absence of those 'fruits of the spirit' for which none was more eager than Paul himself.

The early Church did not accept it as the work of James, but its practical and its controversial tone make it valuable, not only for its own intrinsic worth, but as an interesting landmark in the history of Christianity.

The Epistles to Timothy and Titus may be dated approximately as between 90 and 120. The author is unknown. He deals very faithfully with the sins and shortcomings of his age, and there is a fine practical ring about his exhortation and advice.

Timothy and
Titus 100-120
A.D.

It seems not unlikely that he had before him certain

¹ Rom. 4¹; Gal. 3⁸; Heb. 11¹⁷, 11²¹. ² James 2¹⁴⁻²⁶.

notes and traditions about Paul, and possibly some Pauline correspondence now lost, all of which are used in the Epistles. But the state of the Church organization, with bishops, elders, deacons, etc., belongs to a later day and generation than that of the great missionary apostle, and moreover the language and style is not that of Paul, save in certain places.¹

Liberalising Tendencies

All these changes of outer circumstances were meanwhile influencing the thought of the Jews and the thought of the Christians. As has already been said the Jews were being torn from the old moorings, and launched into the greater current of the world.

The Pharisee policy had found its continuation in those who loved and cherished the Law and its narrow national spirit; while the Sadducee tendency towards absorbing foreign ideas and influences also went on among a very large section of the believers—necessarily so, for they had to live among Gentiles and could not afford, even if they desired, to be supercilious towards them.

Alexandria In Alexandria in particular there was an enormous mixture of races and creeds, and every form of thought, from the wonderful philosophies of Greece to the lowest superstitions of half civilized nations, was represented, for the city was a junction for the great main routes of commerce and of war.

and

Philo

Some few years before the birth of Jesus Philo,

¹ One of the peculiarities of these Epistles is the constant reference to the '*faithful sayings*,' evidently some kind of early Christian proverbial philosophy. ² Tim. 2^{11,13}; Titus 3⁸; 1 Tim. 1¹⁵; 1 Tim. 3¹; 1 Tim. 4⁹.

who was destined to influence Christianity very greatly, had been born of Jewish parents in Alexandria. Brilliant of intellect he was also wide in learning, and the speculations of Plato, Aristotle, and the Stoics had a particular fascination for him ; at the same time he was an enthusiastic Israelite ; and the consequence was that he attempted to reconcile the two conflicting and utterly different lines of thought.

Now there was only one way of making the wide-reaching speculations of Greek thinkers fit into an Old Testament framework, and that was by means of interpreting passages of Scripture in a figurative or allegorical way.

The
reconciliation
of the Law
and
philosophy

This, Philo proceeded to do, and he naturally found Proverbs, Job, Ecclesiastes, and some of the Psalms, and particularly some of the apocryphal books, which it will be remembered were bound up with the rest in the Septuagint (which of course was the version he used), most useful for his purpose ; for they had been written when Greek and Persian ideas had begun to influence Jewish thought, and in them was found the conception of Wisdom as a creative agent, a divine master-workman, and companion of God (see p. 58). It is impossible here to go into Philo's system with any fulness. It will suffice for our present purpose to say that by this fusion of Jewish and Grecian thought—this development of the Wisdom Literature idea—the following results were obtained.

(1) God is the absolute and eternal creative energy of the universe—high above matter.

(2) Matter is the material with which he has to

deal—he *does not create it*, but *he shapes it* to various designs.

(3) Matter, however—the raw material of the universe, so to speak—is *intractable*, it is only capable of producing certain imperfect results.

(4) From the beginning there existed in the divine mind the Thought, the Purpose, the Ideal of the world.

(5) This *Thought* or IDEAL is similar to WISDOM in the Book of Proverbs. Like Wisdom it is at once a divine quality or attribute and a divine AGENT, a Master-Workman, a Celestial Architect working out the supreme behests as well as the imperfect material will permit. This divine agent was the Logos (=Thought, Reason, or Word. The Greek term means both the inward *thought* and the outward expression—word).

(6) The Logos thus becomes the intermediary between earth and heaven.

(7) Men are alienated from Deity by the impurity of the flesh; consequently asceticism, the mortification of the flesh, is good, and will result in enlightenment—i.e. the coming and indwelling of the divine Wisdom. Such briefly was the system of Philo.

Christianity
and Philo

It has already been said hope of the Second Advent was waning, and that Christianity was being forced more and more into the Greek and Roman world of thought.

Its first basis
on Judaism

The result was that Christianity was *forced to seek a new basis* for its claims. To the Jews it had said in effect ‘The Christian religion is a logical continuance and fulfilment of Judaism, only you have made a great mistake in your idea of a Messiah. Jesus

was the Messiah and you crucified him, but all the Old Testament prophets foretold him, and the Jewish race is that to which he primarily came. He will return and will establish his spiritual kingdom—not the mere earthly empire of which you dream.’

That was substantially the attitude of the writer of Matthew’s Gospel. But with the break-up of the Jewish race and the spread of the religion of Jesus increasingly among non-Jewish nations a new state of things was created. These people did not love the Jews as a nation ; they knew them simply as a continual source of rebellion and trouble in the Empire. They cared little for the Jewish Scripture, and to convince them of the truth of Christianity by texts from the Old Testament would have been vain.

Second basis
on philosophy

Moreover there was little to attract a thoughtful Gentile in a conception of an ultimate destiny of things which would make the Hebrew race paramount, while all other nations might be admitted as an act of grace to secondary joys and privileges.

It became the task of Christians to demonstrate to the Greek or Roman that there was a *philosophic basis* for Christianity—to demonstrate that it linked on to, and completed, thoughts with which he was already familiar.

The happy touch in the address Paul is said to have given at Athens—‘ as certain of your own poets have said ’—was the key to the new policy which the Church had to adopt. To show that Christianity was the latest development, the next step, in the onward march of thought and revelation, and that it squared with the *best* Gentile and Jewish religious ideas, and was merely their logical outcome.

The Fourth Gospel

That task of reconciling Christianity and philosophy has left its landmark in the New Testament in the Gospel of John. Judaism had already been stripped of its narrowness and developed by Philo and his school into a speculative system that Plato himself might almost have accepted.

Its weakness hitherto had been the gulf between God in his unapproachable Holiness, and man. That gulf had been bridged partly by the intermediate Logos—the divine Wisdom, Word, or Thought.

Now it might be completely bridged, for in Christianity—so the author of the Fourth Gospel claims—the Logos appeared in human form.

The word or
Logos

‘In the beginning was the Logos,’ he commences, plunging right to the heart of his main contention—the same Logos in which the Greek philosopher believed: and in the person of the founder of Christianity that ‘logos became flesh,’ i.e. the divine Wisdom and Essence became incarnate in human form.

In these words the author struck out an entirely new line of thought in regard to Jesus; and his gospel is conceived on different lines from the other three. He ignores the virgin birth, and the genealogies to prove the Davidic descent. The thought would be too materialistic to please him. He is a philosopher rather than a historian, and he uses the history to illustrate his interpretation of the personality and work of Jesus.

Systematic
arrangement
of Gospel

The arrangement of the Gospel is systematic.

(i) There is the prologue in which the Christian version of Philo’s system is expounded. There are *seven* miracles—only one of each class is selected, as

though to illustrate, the powers of Jesus, rather than to give a complete history of all his deeds.

(ii) There are *seven* witnesses or groups of witnesses to the divine wisdom of Jesus: ¹ (a) the Father, (b) the Son, (c) the Son's works, (d) the Scripture, (e) the Forerunner, (f) the Disciples, (g) the Spirit.

(iii) There are *seven* illustrations of the divine mission. Jesus claims that he is (1) the Bread, (2) the Light, (3) the Door, (4) the Good Shepherd, (5) the Resurrection and Life, (6) the Way, Truth, and Life, (7) the Vine.

The sacrifice of Calvary is regarded as taking the place of the old sacrifice of the Passover, and Jesus takes the place of the lamb. And so while the other gospels represent the *Last Supper* as taking place on the 14th of Nizan, and so being the Passover meal, John makes it on the 13th of Nizan, and so makes the crucifixion coincide with the slaying of the paschal lamb. So also when the thief's legs are broken Jesus is not mutilated, that the scripture (concerning the paschal lamb) may be fulfilled, a bone of him shall not be broken.²

Certain passages occur only in John's Gospel.

- (a) The resurrection of Lazarus.³
- (b) The piercing of Jesus' side.⁴
- (c) The cry, 'I thirst.'⁵
- (d) The last cry, 'It is finished.'
- (e) The long discourses of Jesus, which are deeply philosophical, quite unlike the simple parables and conversations of the other three.

¹ West. xlv. ² John 19³⁸, cp: Numbers 9¹².

³ John 11.

⁴ John 19³⁴.

⁵ John 19²⁸.

Other differences, and peculiarities of the Fourth Gospel are as follows :—

- (a) There are no parables in John.
- (b) Caiaphas said to be high priest—not correct.
- (c) There is no hint of limiting Christ's ministry to Jews, e.g. incident of woman of Samaria, neither in Jerusalem nor Mount Gerizim, is the place of acceptable worship, John 4; Christianity accessible to whosoever believeth, John 3¹⁶; 'other sheep I have not of this fold,' 10¹⁶.

[If these sayings had been known the dispute in Jerusalem as to Gentile converts and the attack on Paul would have been inconceivable.]

- (d) The *Resurrection* and *Judgment* are *spiritualized*, the question of the unfulfilled *Second Advent* is *ignored*. He that heareth my word and believeth Him that sent me, *hath eternal life* and *cometh not into judgment*, but hath passed out of death (i.e. spiritual death) into life.' John 5²⁴, see also 8^{51.1}
- (e) The ministry of Jesus is mainly in *Judæa*, not *Galilee* as in other Gospels.
- (f) There is no healing of those possessed of *evil spirits* in John.
- (g) The Temptation, and the Agony in the Garden, and the cry 'Why hast thou forsaken me?' are ignored by the Fourth Gospel. They were alien to the conception which the writer had of the person and work of Jesus.

¹ 'Those in the tombs' in v. 28 would appear to be those spiritually dead ones—cp., parable of Prodigal Son—'This my son was dead.'

The date and authorship of the Gospel have long been matters of considerable controversy. The question is largely one of external evidence, and it may fairly be said that the general trend of thought is reluctantly but steadily away from admitting the authorship by John. Some of the reasons for this will be obvious on pondering the brief summary given above.

As far as external evidence is concerned, it may be summarised thus.

Papias, bishop of Hierapolis, who wrote an exposition of 'the Lord's Logia,' 115-130 A.D., used some form of Matthew and Mark, but *ignored John and Luke*.

Justin Martyr, writing 145-149 A.D., knew Matthew and Mark, and has a passage possibly quoted from Luke, but *ignores John*.

Tatian, writing 150-180 A.D., *recognized John*, and wrote a harmony of the four Gospels known as the Diatessaron; and the Muratorian Fragment¹ c. 170 also recognized it.²

First
reference to
John's Gospel
c. 150-180 A.D.

The utmost that can be said, therefore, is that after the middle of the second century the Gospel was known, and passed under the apostle's name.

It is very difficult to think that a record direct from the hand of John who lived at Ephesus till a ripe old age, and died about the year 90 probably (or,

¹ This is a somewhat crude and illiterate summary of the books of the New Testament. It was discovered in an Italian library by Muratori, and published by him in 1740.

² There is a reference in Basilides c. 115 A.D. that might be a quotation from the Fourth Gospel—but it is very doubtful indeed—and John's name is not mentioned in connexion with it.

say, in 100 A.D., to give an extreme limit) should not have been at once recognized as authoritative, and that even after twenty or thirty years it should be still either unknown, or regarded as spurious, and therefore ignored. We shall probably not be far wrong in placing the date as 120-140.

Date 120-140

The Epistles which are written under the same name introduce us to another problem and difficulty which the Church had now to encounter—namely the rise of what is known as Gnosticism.

CHAPTER XI

The Growth of the New Testament

IN considering the growth of the New Testament, some reference to Gnosticism is necessary. Origin of Gnosticism mixed Gnosticism, like the system of Philo, arose out of the combining together of Eastern and Western speculation of all kinds. Judaism and Christianity, Phœnician and Babylonian magic, Persian, Greek, and Egyptian mysticism, and theories of all kinds on the problems of life and death made their contributions to one or other of its many sects. They all laid claim to special and certain *knowledge* (gnosis) that guaranteed the truth of their various systems—hence their name *gnostic*, one who *knows* (compare our modern word agnostic—one who says he does *not* know).

Speaking generally, they most of them agreed on the impurity and impermanence of matter, and its alienation from God, and considered that the connection between God and the world was maintained by a series of inferior creations to whom, according to their varying ranks and degrees, the tasks of creation or management were committed. In this way they preserved deity inviolate from the impurity of matter. Theory of God and matter Some of the gnostic sects frankly cut themselves

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adrift from Judaism—others made use of it by adapting figurative interpretations of it, and obtained results that would certainly have startled the authors of the books they expounded in this way.

Theories of
Jesus

The person and work of Jesus afforded them a wide scope for their ingenuity, and they wove both into their systems in all sorts of extraordinary forms. Some maintained he was born in the ordinary way but was suddenly transmuted into a divine personality when the dove descended on him at baptism ; while the other extreme was represented by those who considered he had never really existed in a bodily form at all—that he was in fact a highly spiritualized phantom which, however, had *seemed real* to those who saw him.

Yet others elevated the serpent in the Genesis story into an object of veneration—regarding it as the enlightener of the world. These are but a few of the theories which became rife.

Becomes a
danger to
Christianity

Some of these sects were highly ascetic, others were very lax in their morals ; but in its many forms Gnosticism spread rapidly, and among the Christian communities it began to obtain a hold, or to cause considerable unpleasantness by its opposition.

The position of these primitive churches must be carefully realized. These scattered communities were often very isolated, and with no settled bond of doctrine to unite them ; the gospels not all written, and those that were extant only partially known ; some churches possessing one scrap of literature, some another ; some with practically nothing to guide them save the traditions of some missionary preacher—and not as yet agreed as to any authoritative line of teach-

ing. Moreover, they were almost entirely composed of *converts*—that is to say of people who had previously held some other faith, some other philosophy of life. It was almost inevitable that on doubtful or disputed points they should bring some of their old opinions to interpret their new faith.

Disadvantages
of the early
church

Moreover, they were struggling for existence, surrounded on every side with other and older faiths, and enduring persecutions which were a continual temptation to tone down obnoxious doctrines, and adopt little compromises that might seem almost harmless.

Considering all these and many other circumstances, it must be a continual source of wonder to us, not that Christianity inevitably borrowed some alien ideas, but that it contrived to live and spread and maintain its identity at all.

In the time of Paul Gnosticism had not become a danger, and the Apostle himself speaks of *knowledge* (gnosis) as among the highest gifts and privileges of the Christian, enabling its possessor to understand at least 'in part,' though ultimately 'it should be done away' when that 'which is perfect is come.'¹ Knowledge is one of the gifts, like that of 'healing' or of 'tongues,' 'miracles,' 'prophecy,' etc., of which the true believer may be possessed,² and it distinguishes him from the heathen in whom 'there is not that knowledge.'³

Possible
Pauline
references

There is no dread of the word *knowledge* in the writings of Paul, it suggests only 'sweetness and light.' The one exception to this is the attack on philosophy in the second chapter of Colossians, which seems like a first echo of the later controversy, as

¹ I Cor. 13⁸⁻¹². ² I Cor. 12⁴⁻¹¹. ³ I Cor. 8⁷.

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though in his last days at Rome the Apostle had caught the first dim sounds of the coming strife.

c. 90-190 A.D. But in certain other of the New Testament writings you find yourself in a different atmosphere. The thing has become full of fateful significance; the church is in a death grapple with the hydra-headed monster—a struggle which continued, roughly speaking, through the greater part of the second century.

1 John 120-140 A.D. You find the emphasis increasing somewhat in 1 John—we hear of Antichrists, of people who ‘went out from us but they were not of us’; and the believers are reminded that whatever the claims of these others may be ‘ye have an anointing from the Holy One, and ye *know* all things.’¹

2 John The second epistle returns to the same theme of deceivers and Antichrists, and advises their exclusion from church or home; and in both epistles the same theology as that of the writer of the Fourth Gospel is apparent—the same philosophic tone and the same insistence on their love and faith as the supreme test of Christian discipleship.

The date of the epistles will therefore be about the same as that of the gospel. The allusion in 1 John 2¹⁸ to the last hour and the Antichrist seems to rather point to the bloodshed and horror of the final Jewish wars, 116-135 A.D., whose ghastly occurrences might well revive the expectation that the world was dissolving in blood and ruin.

Jude
c. 150 A.D.

The Epistle of Jude dates from about the middle of the second century, and contains a vigorous attack on those who were corrupting the Church with vicious practices. The attack seems to be directed against

¹ 1 John 2¹⁸⁻²⁰.

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the Gnostic sect of the Carpocratians, one of whose peculiarities was the doctrine that nothing is really evil, and that the soul must pass through *all* experiences good and bad to attain perfection. It degenerated into the depths of degradation and corruption, and finally dwindled away; but the strong wording of Jude's Epistle gives an index to its temporary influence, and its danger to the Church.

The Second Epistle of Peter belongs to the same period, and the same warning against evil invading ^{2 Peter} c. 150-170 A.D. the very services of the Church and sensuality threatening its life that we find in Jude, are repeated; but the writer lays stress on the true knowledge of the Christian, which is connected with self-control, virtue; 'the knowledge (gnosis) of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ' is the means by which, in his opinion, the faithful can 'escape the defilements of the world.'¹

With this Second Epistle of Peter the writing of the various portions of the Bible comes to an end about the year 170 A.D.

But it had yet to be collected into its present shape and order, and the different portions of it, scattered as they were over the Gentile world, brought together.

Appropriately enough in this last epistle there occurs for the first time the term *scripture*, applied to Christian literature,² but it is used to describe a collection of Paul's epistles.

Between the years 175 and 200 there seems to have come into existence, no one quite knows where, or by whom collected—it was probably a matter of natural growth and selection—a more or less settled body of writings. It was in two parts, known as 'the Gospel'

¹ 2 Peter 2²⁰.

² 2 Peter 3¹⁶.

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and 'the Apostle.'¹ It comprised our New Testament with the omission of 2 Peter, 2 and 3 John, Jude, and James.

The gradual growth, as far as we can trace it by the references of early writers, will be best understood in brief tabular form.

Evidence as to
various parts
of New
Testament

(a) Papias, c. 120, mentions what appear to be the first rough drafts of Mark and Matthew, and also alludes to the existence of spurious gospels.

(b) Justin, c. 150, speaks of 'Memoirs of the Apostles'—'teaching, from Christ himself'; and though he never names the gospels seems to have known *the first three*, and to have had a preference for the *third*.

(c) Muratorian Fragment and Tatian, both about 170, recognize the *four* gospels.

(d) Ignatian epistles, c. 175, recognize our New Testament, *omitting* 2 Peter, 2 and 3 John, Jude, and James.

(e) Irenæus, c. 185, *omits* 2 Peter, James, 3 John, and Jude; labels as '*highly esteemed*' 2 John, 1 Peter, and the Shepherd of Hermas; accepts the rest.

(f) Eusebius, c. 330, mentions as *disputed*, James, Jude, 2 Peter, 2 and 3 John, and Revelation.

Settlement of
Canon
332 A.D. by
Eusebius

By this time, however, it was becoming absolutely necessary to settle once and for all what books were, and what were not authoritative and genuine; accordingly the Emperor Constantine commanded Eusebius to prepare a definite list of what he thought genuine, which he thereupon proceeded to do, fifty copies of the New Testament being afterwards made. This first list 'by authority' was as far as we can

¹ Mentioned in Ignatian Epistles c. 175.

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gather our New Testament, with the omission of Revelation. Eusebius had, it need hardly be pointed out, a most difficult task—and in performing it he had only his own private judgment and the opinions of his contemporaries, or predecessors, as to the genuineness of the various books to guide him in the matter.

A subject which is sufficiently dry is at least illuminated by one slight flash of humour in the argument used by Tertullian to establish the existing four gospels against any apocryphal new-comers; there must be four, and there cannot be more, he considers, since there are but four universal winds, and the world itself has four quarters.

Tertullian on
proof of four
gospels

Some idea may be formed of the confused mass of legend and tradition which had accumulated by this time, from the statement that in the second century *over a hundred* spurious gospels, epistles, and books of various kinds, all purporting to be genuine, and dealing with the life of Jesus or his disciples, were current and were widely read and accepted, in spite of the efforts of some of the leaders to suppress them. Nor were the leaders themselves always competent to form accurate judgments as to the value of evidence. It is startling to find Eusebius, to whom was entrusted the responsible task of sifting the true from the false, actually in his Ecclesiastical History, narrating a miraculous cure of 'Agbarus, who reigned over the nation beyond the Euphrates with great glory,' by Jesus, which he supports by quoting in full the letter of Agbarus to Jesus, *and the letter from Jesus in reply to it*, which he assures us are 'taken from the public records of the city of Edessa.'¹

More than
100 spurious
gospels, etc.

¹ Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, chap. xiii.

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Such was the credulity of the age. It need hardly be said that the whole incident is mythical.

Value of the
Father's
evidence

It is frequently and very wrongly assumed that a quotation from a Church 'Father' settles any disputed point once and for all, doctrinal or historical. Wonderful men as some of them were for the age in which they lived, it should not be forgotten that they were subject to all its limitations, to many of its superstitions, and to much of its credulity. Valuable as their testimony is, it must always be taken subject to a possible allowance for these things.

Jerome
340-420 A.D.

In the fourth century Jerome (340-420) devoted part of a long and strenuous life to compiling an edition of the Old and New Testaments, which should be as nearly accurate as he could make it with the material at his disposal. The work was done in a convent over which he presided at Bethlehem. Here in the retirement of the Syrian hills, in the birthplace of the founder of Christianity, he produced the Latin translation of the Bible which is known as the Vulgate.

The Vulgate
c. 400 A.D.

The Old Testament had hitherto existed only in Hebrew, and in the Greek version known as the Septuagint. This latter collection was of course the one in use among the Christian churches. It included all the Jewish Apocrypha, and the Fathers quote these freely as of equal authority with the rest of the Bible.

This work of Jerome may be said to have made our modern Bible. It gradually became the version in general use, and by the seventh century had supplanted its rivals, thus settling the Canon¹ once and for all; it is the official Bible of the Roman Catholic

¹ i.e. The recognised or official list of the books of the Bible:

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Church, having been made so by the decree of the Council of Trent in 1546; and the English translation of it by the heroic Wycliffe was the first English Bible to be produced. The history of its subsequent development, and its wide dissemination by means of the printing press, are too well known to need repetition.

First
English Bible

It may now be thought by the reader that with Jerome's Latin Bible we reach firm ground, and that henceforth there is no more room for doubt or mistakes, interpolation or alteration. It is, however, not quite plane-sailing even yet.

Whatever the manuscripts may have been which were possessed at the end of the second century, we do not possess them. They were copied and re-copied by hand; where uncertainties occurred, where marginal notes were added, marginal comments made, or extracts from other manuscripts attached, these were frequently *made part of the new copy*, with no note added to inform the reader of the fact; or the scribe would attempt to make some obscure passage clear and possibly introduce some erroneous idea of his own into it.¹ The consequence is that in the various manuscripts that have come down there are countless variations, and the only way in which the text of either Authorized or Revised Version has been arrived at is by laborious comparison of all the variations and the choosing of what seems to be the oldest version, or the reading that has the majority of documents in its favour.

Manuscripts
of Bible

Copyists'
errors and
comments

Hebrew was originally written without vowels (see p. 5); the earliest Greek manuscripts though they possessed vowels were written in capital letters, without

¹ See Robertson Smith and Driver.

126 Growth of the New Testament

Method of
writing the
Greek MSS.

spaces between the words, and with no stops of any kind, and with no division into either chapters or verses.¹ Says one of the American revisers, speaking of the difficulties this causes: 'The punctuation likewise can be determined, not by manuscript authority, but only by the meaning of the context, and is often subject to doctrinal considerations, as notably so in the famous passage affecting the divinity of Christ (Rom. 9⁵) which *admits of three, if not of seven different punctuations and constructions.*'

150,000
variations of
text.

The reader will gain some insight into the confusion of readings (they amount to about 150,000 differences, great and small) by glancing at the introductions to the Revised Version of the Old and of the New Testament. The principles proceeded upon are there set forth, and the significant fact will be seen that the revision occupied *fourteen years*; and that the revisers, beside the enormous amount of detail work they did privately, met together 792 times to discuss various points, each meeting generally occupying six hours.

The work of
revising

The two oldest written copies of our New Testament which we possess date from the fourth century—the Codex Vaticanus and the Codex Sinaiticus—while three others belong to a century later. These do not agree with one another. After the fifth century the manuscripts and the disagreements multiply with repeated copying.

A Roman Catholic prelate, Cardinal Hugo, who

¹ This style of writing is known as *uncial* (from the Latin *uncia*, an inch—that being about the length of the letters). It continued in general use till about the 9th century, when the *cursive* (running or flowing) style replaced it.

lived in the thirteenth century, introduced the system of dividing the New Testament literature into chapters. Three centuries later the further step of dividing the chapters into verses was taken, and appeared for the first time in an edition of the Vulgate printed in 1555.

From the time of the Reformation till recent years the Bible has occupied a position of even greater importance than it did before. For while the Roman Catholic Church claims proudly to rest on its own long tradition and its divinely guaranteed authority, Protestantism has refused to recognize these claims, and has rested its multifarious theologies mainly on Scripture interpreted in the light of reason.¹

The very position thus claimed for the Bible has made it the object of keener examination, more elaborate exposition, and closer criticism than ever before, and in the last century that process has gradually but inevitably undermined the former claims that were made for verbal inspiration and literal accuracy,—claims which the Bible never made for itself, and which the early Church never made for it, until the attacks of its opponents, and the prolific crop of spurious writings evolved by Christian authors with the pious intention of edifying the faithful, compelled it to harden its doctrines, and entrench itself against outside influences, that threatened otherwise to saturate and ultimately to dissolve it.

The Higher Criticism, so-called, has revealed to us a book which, if less miraculous, is more wonderful and valuable than that of our forefathers; for in its ancient pages, its venerable records, and its

¹ See, for example, articles 6, 7, 8, 20 and 21 of the Thirty-nine Articles.

resonant language we seem to see and hear the pulsing of those mighty forces which guide and direct 'the steady gain of man'; every document a milestone in the long trail of humanity, every doctrine and idea, even though it be dead and discarded by us—even as it was (half unconsciously to themselves) dead and discarded by the later writers of the Bible itself—a stepping-stone on which men's thoughts have mounted to higher things, as humanity has swept in storm and turmoil down the ever broadening avenues of progress.

Israel's
history but a
chapter

And this record, reaching back as it does some three thousand years, is now seen to be but one chapter of the race history, whose fascinating and wonderful records are being discovered in the mounded ruins, and the drifted sand, which cover the remains of the vast empires, which were already hoary with age when Israel bursts upon our vision from the dimness of the yet unravelled past.

Our debt to
Higher
Criticism

The letter killeth but the spirit giveth life. In the light of what we now know, much that was perplexing finds its explanation; much that has been a source of doubt and difficulty to our modern minds takes its place as a mere phase in a nation's evolving thought—the mistakes and passions of a people's childhood; seeming contradictions resolve themselves into processes of growth; and all that is most precious and beautiful remains undimmed, eternally interesting and inspiring to every lover of literature and every student of life.

If the old view is gone we need not repine—it has gone only to make room for a wider view of Revelation which no longer limits it to one small section of the

great family of man ; a longer vista of human history, that renders life a more wonderful thing than our fathers dreamed ; a larger thought of God as the Eternal Father who guides the wandering Children of Men through the discipline of the Desert, past the bitter Waters of Affliction to knowledge, to progress ; and towards the true worship which is neither limited to Mount Gerizim nor Mount Zion, but whose sanctuary is the human heart—whose acceptable sacrifice is the love and service of human lives—and whose great Bible comprises all that is gracious, beautiful, and inspiring in the annals of the race from the beginning even until now.

Appendix

The two following examples will give a better idea of the many hands engaged in the compilation of an apparently simple and straightforward story.

I. THE DELUGE LEGEND

Let the reader take pencil or ink and underline the following passages in Gen. 6⁵⁻⁹¹⁷ : Gen. 6⁵⁻⁸, 7¹⁻⁵, 7⁷⁻¹⁰, 7¹², 7¹⁶ (from 'and the Lord')-17, 7²²⁻²³, 8² (from 'and the rain') to 8³, 8⁶⁻¹², 8¹³ (from 'Noah removed'), 8²⁰⁻²². The passages underlined will be the J narratives, while the unmarked sections will represent the work of the Priestly Elohist (after the time of the Exile). Interwoven as the two accounts now are, yet each, if its passages be read continuously, makes an almost unbroken narrative. On the next page is given in abbreviated form (1) of the Babylonian Flood Legend, (2) the J account, (3) the version of P. The Babylonian account is from the epic of Gilgames, which was discovered, inscribed on clay tablets, in the library of Asur-bani-pal, which has been excavated. What the precise date of this ancient flood legend may be, is difficult to determine exactly, but it is far older than the account in J ; and a still older fragment which dates in its *written* form to about the year 2140 B.C. has been recently discovered. The tablets are much damaged, but enough survives of the account to show its date and its purport, and to prove that the Babylonian Flood story is of vast antiquity.

The Deluge Legend

BABYLONIAN ACCOUNT.

The gods were wroth at the sinfulness of man; and Bel resolves to destroy all things in a universal deluge.

One of the gods, Ea, decides to preserve one man Par-napisti alive; so he warns him in a dream, and bids him build a ship.

Into this ship he is told to take 'the seeds of life of all kinds.'

Most exact directions are given as to the structure and design of the ship. It is to be divided into compartments and is to be coated with bitumen within and without.

JAHVIST VERSION.

Jahveh saw the wickedness of man and determined to destroy both man and beast, for it repented him that he had made them.

The righteousness of Noah, however, is observed, and Jahveh desires to spare him, and bids him build an ark.

He is bidden to take into it not only his own family, but *pairs* of all *unclean* beasts and birds and *sevens* of all *clean* beasts and birds, to keep seed alive in all the face of the earth.

PRIESTLY VERSION.

Commences with the genealogy of Noah.

The earth and all flesh upon it was corrupt before God and he said, behold, I will destroy them, with the earth.

Noah finds grace and is ordered to build an ark.

He is told to take *pairs* of all beasts and birds *clean and unclean* into the vessel with him.

The precise dimensions of the ark are given; Noah is to build it in stories, and it is to be painted with pitch (bitumen) inside and out.

[Continued overleaf

The Deluge Legend—*continued*

Par-napisti enters the ship with his family and goods, and his servants, together with all kinds of beasts and birds.

Par-napisti's steersman takes charge of the ship.

The deluge rages and all things are destroyed; and on the seventh day a calm sets in. Par-napisti opens the 'air-hole' and sees dry land.

His ship grounds on the Mountain of Nasir.

After seven days he sends out (1) a dove, (2) a swallow, (3) a raven.

The dove and swallow return, finding no resting-place.

Noah and all his family enter the ark, together with all the animals, etc.

Noah and his family enter the ark, and all the animals. Noah's age is said to be 600 years.

The deluge rages forty days and forty nights and everything is destroyed. It then ceases and Noah opens the window.

The deluge overwhelms every thing, and the waters increase for 150 days.

The ship grounds on Mount Ararat on seventeenth day of seventh month.

He sends forth (1) a raven, (2) a dove.

The dove returns, 'finding no rest for the sole of her foot,' and on being sent out a second time after an interval of seven days, returns with the twig of olive.

The raven does not come back.

The raven flies to and fro till
the waters subside.

Then the ship is unloaded of
its living freight, on the mountain.

Noah removes the cover of
the ark, finds the earth dry, and
disembarks.

A further two and a half
months elapse and then the
mountain tops are seen; a
further three months and the
earth is dry.

Noah and his family and the
animals disembark (a year has
elapsed since the voyage began).

Par-napisti offers sacrifice, and
'the gods smell the sweet savour :
the gods gathered like flies to the
sacrifices.

He builds an altar and offers
sacrifice to Jahveh, who smells
the sweet savour,

Bel at first is angry at the
escape of the inmates of the ship,
but Ea pacifies him, points out
the inadvisability of sweeping
all life away, and recommends
him instead to punish man by
famine, storm, and pestilence.
Bel accordingly forgives Ea, and
sends Par-napisti and his wife to
dwell 'afar off at the mouth of
the rivers,' and gives them a
partially divine nature.

and promises he will no more
curse the ground for man's sake,
nor destroy every living thing,
but henceforth seedtime and
harvest shall never cease.

and he receives a number of
admonitions and instructions
from God, ending with the
beautiful old legend of the sig-
nificance of the rainbow, 9.1.17.

II. STORY FROM THE BOOK OF JUDGES

- (1) Type [Appendix]=work of the Jahvist (J).
- (2) Type [Appendix]=work of Elohist (E).
- (3) Type [APPENDIX]=narrative in which J and E are so blended as to be indistinguishable.
- (4) Type [Appendix]=additions made by the Editor who blended the narratives J and E together.
- (5) Type [Appendix]=work of the Deuteronomist (D).
- (6) Type [Appendix]=work of the Priestly Editor who re-edited the narrative after the Exile (i.e. about the fifth century).
- (7) Type [Appendix]=still later editorial revisions.
- (8) Type [Appendix]=of the later or Second Elohist.

The numbers in the margin below correspond to those above and refer to the various writers concerned in this extract.

The following example is from the Book of Judges and shows the work of some six different authors or editors. The contribution or insertion of each is represented in a different type.

- (1) Judges 9¹⁰. And Gaal ben Obed and his kinsmen came and moved into Shechem and the citizens of Shechem put confidence in him; and they went out into the country and gathered the grapes from their vineyards, and trod them; and they made festivities and went to the temple of their God and ate and drank, and cursed Abimelech; and Gaal ben Obed said who is this Abimelech? and who are the Shechemites that we should serve him? [this 'J' narrative proceeds without interruption down to v. 39, and then continues] v. 10, and Gaal marched out at the head of the citizens of Shechem and fought with Abimelech. ⁴⁰And Abimelech pursued him, and he fled before Abimelech, and many fell slain, even to the entrance of the gate. ⁴¹And Abimelech returned and dwelt at Arumah; but Zebul drove out Gaal and his kinsmen that they should not longer live in Shechem.

⁴²On the following day the people went out into the country (2) and Abimelech was informed of it. ⁴³So he took his men and divided them into three bodies, and lay in ambush in the open country, and when he saw the people coming out of the city he rose and attacked them. [This 'E' narrative continues without interruption to v. 51, and then proceeds . . . ⁵²Abimelech came to the tower and attacked it; and as he drew near to the door of the tower to burn it ⁵³a certain woman threw an upper millstone on Abimelech's head, shattering his skull. ⁵⁴And he called quickly to his attendant armour bearer, and bade him: Draw thy sword, and kill me lest men say: a woman slew him. So his page ran him through and he died. ⁵⁵And when the Israelites saw that Abimelech was dead they dispersed to their homes.

⁵⁶Thus God brought home to Abimelech the crime (4) which he committed against his father in murdering his seventy brothers; ⁵⁷and all the crime of the men of Shechem was brought upon their own heads; the curse of Jotham ben-Jerubaal came true to them.

Judges, Chap. 10.

AFTER ABIMELECH THERE AROSE TO DELIVER ISRAEL TOLA BEN-PUAH BEN-DODO, A MAN OF ISSACHAR, WHO DWELT AT SHAMIR IN THE HIGHLANDS OF EPHRAIM. ²HE JUDGED ISRAEL TWENTY-THREE YEARS: THEN HE DIED AND WAS BURIED AT SHAMIR. ³AFTER HIM AROSE JAIR THE GILEADITE, WHO JUDGED ISRAEL TWENTY-TWO YEARS. HE HAD THIRTY SONS, who rode on thirty asses; ⁴AND HE HAD THIRTY TOWNS CALLED HAVOTH-JAIR TO THIS DAY IN THE LAND OF GILEAD. ⁵AND JAIR DIED AND WAS BURIED AT CAMON. (3) ⁶And the Israelites again offended JHVH, and served the Baals and the Astartes and the Gods of Syria and of Phœnicia, and of Moab, and of the Ammonites, and of the Philistines, and forsook JHVH and did not serve Him. ⁷And JHVH was incensed against Israel, and sold them into the power of the Philistines, and into the power of the Ammonites, ⁸and they crushed the Israelites that year, eighteen years, all the Israelites who were across the Jordan in the land of the Amorites who were in Gilead. ⁹And the Ammonites crossed the Jordan to make war also upon Judah, and Benjamin, and upon the tribe of Ephraim; and Israel was in great straits. ¹⁰Then the Israelites cried to JHVH for help saying: we have sinned against thee in that we have forsaken our God JHVH and served the Baals. ¹¹And JHVH answered (5)

136 Story from the Book of Judges

- the Israelites: Did not the Egyptians,** and the
(6) Amorites, and the Ammonites, and the Philistines, and the
Phoenicians,¹² and the Amalekites and the Midianites
(8) **oppress you; and when ye cried to me for help**
I delivered you from their power? ¹³ **But ye on**
your part have forsaken me and served other
gods; therefore I will not deliver you again, etc.

[The later Elohist continues down to verse 17, and the narrative is then taken up by the Deuteronomist for a couple of verses, and he in turn is succeeded by the first Elohist, and so on.]¹

¹ Taken from the Polychrome Bible—Book of Judges, pp. 20-21.

THE END

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